

HENRY

WADSWORTH

LONGFELLOW



*For their gallantry they have been  
And the songs of their bravery*

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# HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

HIS LIFE, HIS WORKS, HIS FRIENDSHIPS

BY

GEORGE LOWELL AUSTIN

ILLUSTRATED

*NEW EDITION*

BOSTON

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1888

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## PREFACE.

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I FIRST became acquainted with Mr. Longfellow in the autumn of 1868, a few days after taking up my residence in Cambridge. Many circumstances, irrespective of the characteristic good will and geniality of the poet, tended to ripen this acquaintance into a friendship, to which I now revert with more than ordinary pleasure and gratification. Thenceforth we met frequently and talked over matters which, I have no doubt, interested me much more than they did my friend. In 1876 my "History of Massachusetts" was published. Having examined a copy of the work, Mr. Longfellow sent for me one day and suggested the preparation of a work which should comprise in its subject-matter very full biographical data relative to our elder American poets. The suggestion was duly considered, and the project seemed to me to be at that time perfectly feasible. Upon making known to Mr. Longfellow my decision, it was at once agreed that we should begin with his own literary life and works. At intervals he gave me much of his valuable time, and I very carefully gathered together from his lips my memoranda. The removal of the poet to his summer home at Nahant naturally suspended the

interviews ; and, while I hoped to continue my pleasant labors in the autumn of 1877, other duties of a personal nature interfered and at length forced me to confess, in response to repeated inquiries of Mr. Longfellow, my inability at the time to complete the plan which he had so kindly proposed.

Soon after the death of Mr. Longfellow, Mr. John Owen, his life-long friend, strongly urged me to again take up the work, and at the same time offered me his generous advice and assistance. He freely placed at my disposal all the facts in his possession, and jotted down from memory many more. We were daily together ; and the work was rapidly, but carefully and conscientiously, carried forward. About the middle of April, 1882, on a Sunday and just after we had completed our memoranda, we strolled off together. The bright sun was overhead, but the air was chilly and the earth was damp. That evening Mr. Owen was taken ill, and continued so for nearly a fortnight. His malady was not thought to be serious at first by his attending physician, but the end proved otherwise ; and he passed quietly away on the 22nd, in the seventy-sixth year of his age. I can pay no better tribute to my friend's memory than this : he was ever conscientious in his opinions, untiring in his search after truth, and faithful to all whom he recognized as his friends. Though his name does not appear as often as it ought in the following pages, still I am only too glad to acknowledge my great indebtedness to him from the first page to the last.

Without Mr. Owen's assistance I should never have completed this volume. At his earnest entreaty, I at once made known to the Rev. Samuel Longfellow, the younger brother of the poet, and himself a true poet as well, the purpose which I had in mind. I did this because I was unwilling to undertake such a work without the knowledge of the family, and still I did not feel like taking counsel with the latter at such a premature moment. The Rev. Mr. Longfellow received me most cordially and encouraged me to go on with the enterprise.

In the preparation of this volume I have had specially one object; namely, to present a clear but popular picture of the poet's literary life. The details of his personal and private life, or at least so much of it as belongs by right strictly to his family, I have purposely avoided. It will be noticed also, that I have as a rule omitted all correspondence which passed between Mr. Longfellow and his friends and admirers. Many of my own recollections of the poet are scattered throughout the work; but I have thought it proper to omit such as are purely private and possess no particular public interest. For the same reason, I have endeavored not to thrust myself into the narrative any oftener than it seemed necessary to establish a fact or to venture an opinion.

To the surviving classmates of the poet, and to others among his most intimate friends, I stand largely indebted. My correspondence has been large, and the responses have been full and generous; and I only regret that I have not the space to mention the names of those to

whom in general terms I must again acknowledge my gratitude for assistance.

The frontispiece portrait of Mr. Longfellow is a reproduction, by the Lithotype Company of New York, from the latest and most admired negative taken by Mr. Warren. For brilliancy, softness and accuracy of detail, it is truly admirable.

The work is now committed to the public in the hope that it will not be found wanting in interest and value. Mr. Longfellow's life throughout was a plea for cheerfulness and good will to his fellow-men. I trust that the story of his life, as portrayed in these pages, will not fail to teach the same inspiring and ennobling lesson.

G. L. A.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., January, 1883.

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# HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE ANCESTRY OF THE POET.

SOME time towards the last quarter of the seventeenth century, there came to live in the town of Newbury, Mass.,<sup>1</sup> a young man of sturdy habits, who bore the name of William Longfellow. He was born in Yorkshire, England, in or about the year 1651.<sup>2</sup> Having located in the New World, and

<sup>1</sup> " 'Ould Newberry,' as it was anciently called, was settled, incorporated, and paid its first tax, in the spring of 1635. It derives its name from Newbury, a town in Berkshire, Eng., situated in the south part of the county, on the river Kennet, fifty-six miles west from London. It was so named in honor of the Rev. Thomas Parker, who had for some time preached in Newbury, Eng., before his arrival in America. Till its incorporation in 1635, it was called by its Indian name, Quascacunquen, — a name which the natives gave, not to the whole territory (as the word signifies a 'waterfall'), but to 'the falls' on what is now called the river Parker, on whose banks the first settlers fixed their habitations." — *A Sketch of the History of Newbury, Newburyport, and West Newbury*, from 1635 to 1845, by Joshua Coffin, A.B., S.H.S., Boston, 1845. One writer, on what authority I know not, states that William Longfellow arrived in America in 1663.

<sup>2</sup> "Bro. Longfellow's Father, Will<sup>m</sup> Longfellow lives at Hosforth near Leeds in Yorkshire. Tell him Bro. has a son W<sup>m</sup> a fine likely child, a very good piece of Land, & greatly wants a little stock to manage it, and y<sup>t</sup> Father hath paid for him upwards of an hundred

established himself as a merchant, he married, on Nov. 10, 1678,<sup>1</sup> Anne,<sup>2</sup> the daughter of Henry Sewall, and laid the foundations of a home in that part of the town then known as the "Falls."<sup>3</sup> His career, however, was not destined to be crowned with the garlands of peace; for we know, that in 1690, as ensign of the Newbury Company, he took an active part in the ill-fated expedition which Sir Wil-

pounds to get him out of Debt."—Letter of Samuel Sewall to Stephen Sewall, dated "Boston in N. E., Xr. 24, 1680," in *N. E. Hist. and Gen. Register*, vol. xxiv. p. 123. Stephen Sewall was at this time residing at Bishop-Stoke, Hampshire, Eng.

<sup>1</sup> Coffin, p. 308, says that the marriage took place 10th Nov., 1676, which is an error.

<sup>2</sup> Anne Sewall, the daughter of Henry Sewall, was born 3d Sept., 1662. She was a sister of the chief justice. By this union were born William (the child mentioned above), 25th Nov., 1679; Stephen, 10th Jan., 1681; Anne, 3d Oct., 1683; Stephen, 22d Sept., 1685; Elizabeth, 3d July, 1688; and Nathan, 5th Feb., 1690.

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the old Longfellow house in Byfield, Mr. Horace F. Longfellow of that place, under date of Feb. 18, 1882, thus writes:—

"DEAR SIR, — At the request of my father, Joseph Longfellow, I answer yours of the 14th, in regard to the old Longfellow house at Byfield, Mass. It was probably built by William Longfellow about 1676, at or about the time of his marriage with Anne Sewall. The location of the house is unsurpassed. It is situated on a slightly eminence at the very head of tide-water on the river Parker, the sparkle of whose waters as they go tumbling over the falls adds a picturesqueness to the natural beauty of the scenery that lies spread out on either hand, — hill and vale, forest and field, the outgoing or incoming tide. Nature was lavish here; and young Longfellow, appreciating it all, erected the old house, to which he took his young bride. It still stands, although two centuries and more have passed since its outer frame was put together. It has not been occupied for twenty odd years, and of course is in a dilapidated condition. I was born under the old roof-tree myself; and so were my father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather (son of William) before me. The large chimney was taken down years ago, a part of the house itself has been removed; but

" 'The scenes of my childhood are brought fresh to my mind,'

liam Phips conducted against the stronghold of Quebec. The fleet, which sailed from Boston Harbor on the 9th of August, consisted of thirty-two vessels.



The Granite Horse-block and the Large Elm.

having on board an army of twenty-two hundred soldiers. The voyage was a tedious one, and Quebec

and I can see the old weather-beaten house with its rear roof descending nearly to the ground; the long kitchen with its low ceiling and wide fireplace; the big brick oven in which was baked the Thanksgiving pies and puddings (I can taste them now); the big 'best room;' the winding stairs; the old spinning-wheel in the attic; the well-curb and its long sweep at the end of the house; in front, the granite horse-block, and the large elm spreading over all. The old elm still lives, but is feeling the effects of age. The old elm and the house will end their existence together, and soon.

"Very truly,

"HORACE F. LONGFELLOW.

"BYFIELD, MASS."



was not reached until in the early part of the month of October.<sup>1</sup>

The story of the expedition has often been told. The attempt to capture Quebec proved futile, and the audacious commander was forced to abandon the object. While the fleet was returning, and had already reached the Gulf of St. Lawrence, it was overtaken by a furious storm. The vessels were scattered: and one of them, having on board the Newbury Company, was driven on the desolate shore of Anticosti; and the gallant ensign, with nine of his comrades, was drowned. This event took place in the night of the 31st of October.<sup>2</sup>

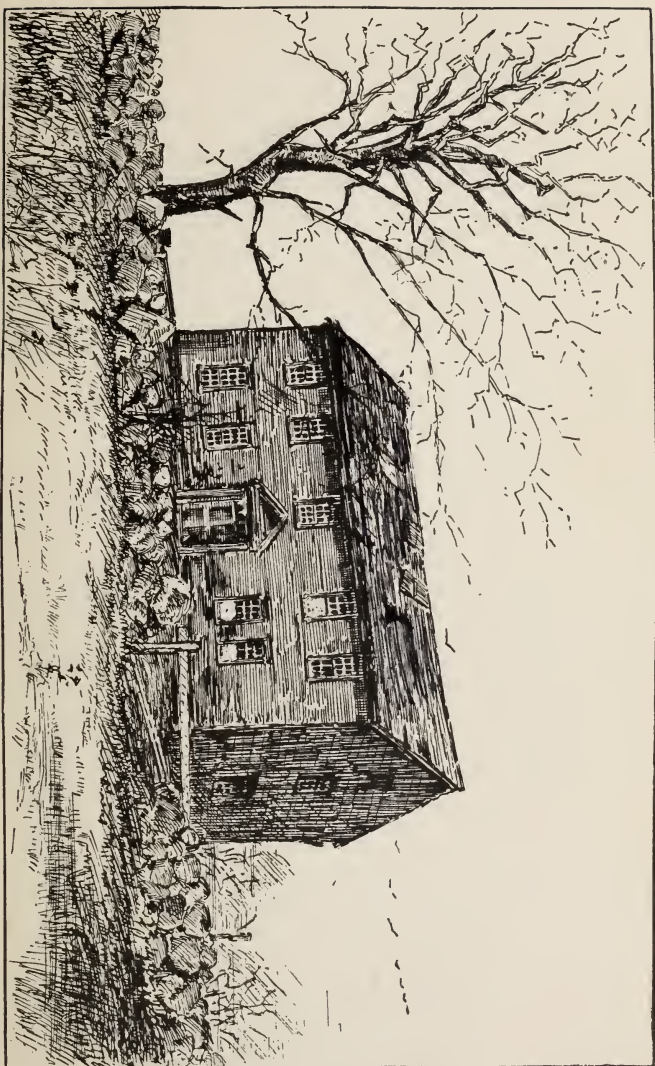
Of William Longfellow's six children, all but one survived to mourn the death of their father. One of them, a lad of about five years of age at the time of the parental loss, bore the name of Stephen.<sup>3</sup> Of his early life, even of his manhood, the records are scant. He became a blacksmith, and probably lived always in Newbury, where "we may picture him,

<sup>1</sup> According to Judge Sewall, William Longfellow went in 1687 to England to obtain his patrimony in Yorkshire. It was probably in this year that his father died.

<sup>2</sup> "'Twas Tuesday, the 18<sup>th</sup> of November, that I heard of the death of Capt. Stephen Greenleaf, Lieut. James Smith, and Ensign W<sup>m</sup> Longfellow, Serj<sup>t</sup> Increase Pilsbury, who with Will Mitchell, Jabez Musgro, and four more were drown'd at Cape Britoon [an error] on Friday night the last of October.'" — Judge Sewall's *Diary*, anno 1690. William Longfellow's widow married Henry Short, May 11, 1692.

<sup>3</sup> William Longfellow had two sons who bore the name of Stephen. The first of the name, born in 1681, died in early childhood. The second, who afterwards became the blacksmith, was born, as stated above, on the 22d of September, 1685. He was named for his mother's grandfather, Stephen Dummer, and was the first of the six generations of Stephen Longfellows.





The Old Longfellow Homestead at Newbury, Mass.



like the poet's hero of the village smithy, with large and sinewy hands, brawny arms, his brow wet with honest sweat, as he swings his heavy sledge 'with measured beat and slow.' "

Stephen the blacksmith married, March 25, 1714, Abigail Tompson, the daughter of Rev. Edward Tompson of Marshfield, by whom he had ten children.<sup>1</sup> One of the sons, Stephen, jun., was born on Feb. 7, 1723, and quite early in life discovered signs of precocious talent. He was more fond of books than of the forge and the sledge-hammer, and gave such promise of intellectual strength that his father was induced to bestow upon him the benefits of an education. At the proper time he was sent to Harvard College, where he received a diploma of graduation in 1742.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Elwell of Portland writes as follows concerning the Longfellow grant of land in the parish of Byfield, Newbury, Mass.: "It is a remarkable and interesting coincidence that the families of two of the first poets of our time, Whittier and Longfellow, originated in the same neighborhood; the original Longfellow home in Byfield being but about five miles distant from the old Whittier house in East Haverhill, both of which are now standing. The Byfield Longfellows are descended from Samuel, son of the first Stephen, and brother of the second Stephen, who came to Portland in 1745. Samuel had a son Nathan; Nathan two sons, Joseph and Samuel; Joseph a son Horace. Joseph and Horace still live on land included in the original grant. The old house is quite a Mecca for literary pilgrims. The Byfield Longfellows are prominent in local politics, and have talent as speakers and writers. Samuel, brother of Joseph, lives in Groveland, a neighboring town. He has a daughter Alice, who is making a reputation as a writer and public reader. Joseph, of Byfield, who is a noted wit, says, that when he was a young man he was ashamed of his name, especially as he was literally a Longfellow; but when Henry Wadsworth began to make a reputation, and people would ask him if he was related to the poet, he became proud of it."

After completing his college course, Stephen Longfellow taught the village school in York. It was after he had been thus engaged, and was out of employment, that he received the following letter:—

FALMOUTH, NOV. 15, 1744.

SIR, — We need a schoolmaster. Mr. Plaisted advises of your being at liberty. If you will undertake the service in this place, you may depend upon our being generous and your being satisfied. I wish you'd come as soon as possible, and doubt not but you'll find things much to your content.

Your humble ser't,

THOS. SMITH.

P.S. — I write in the name and with the power of the selectmen of the town. If you can't serve us, pray advise us of it per first opportunity.

The author of the foregoing epistle was the venerable guardian of souls in Falmouth, or Portland as it is now called. That Stephen Longfellow considered well the proposal, and acted favorably upon it, is disclosed by the following simple record, which we read in Parson Smith's "Journal," under date of April 11, 1745: "Mr. Longfellow came here to live."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Smith, the venerable minister whose Journal contains so much that is valuable bearing on the early history of Portland, Me., was born March 10, 1702, the eldest of a large family of children. He graduated at Harvard in 1720, entered at once upon theological studies, and in 1727 was settled in Falmouth, as the first regularly ordained minister in Maine east of Wells. In 1728 he was married to Sarah Tyng (daughter of William Tyng, Esq., of Woburn, Mass.), who died Oct. 1, 1742. In 1744 he was married to Mrs. Olive Jordan, widow of Capt. Samuel Jordan of Saco, and

One week later, Mr. Longfellow opened his school "in a building on the corner of Middle Street and School, now Pearl Street;" and among his pupils were the names of many of the most prominent families of that day. His salary was two hundred pounds sterling, not including the tuition-fees, which for each pupil was eighteen shillings and eightpence per year.

Matters fared well with the schoolmaster, and his time was not so fully occupied with the duties of his profession that he could not fall in love. He met and became acquainted with Tabitha Bragdon, a daughter of Samuel Bragdon of York; and on Oct. 19, 1749, he was married to her. Shortly afterwards he forsook his boarding-place at the parsonage,<sup>1</sup> and went to live in a house of his own in Fore Street.<sup>2</sup> Thither, also, he transferred his school, and continued to teach until 1760, at which time he was appointed clerk of the judicial court.

The following notice was annually, with change of date, posted on the schoolhouse door: —

"Notice is hereby given to such persons as are disposed to send their children to school in this place the ensuing year, that the year commences this day, and the price will be as usual; viz.. eighteen shillings and eightpence

lived with her about twenty years. In 1766 he was married to Mrs. Elizabeth Wendell, daughter of John Hunt of Boston. By his first wife, Parson Smith had eight children. He died May 25, 1795, in the ninety-fourth year of his age.

<sup>1</sup> In his copy of Smith's Journal, Mr. William Willis says in a MSS. note, "I think Mr. Longfellow boarded with Mr. Smith when he came here until his marriage."

<sup>2</sup> The Fore-street house was built on the lot now occupied by the Eagle Sugar Refinery.



per year for each scholar that comes by the year, and eight shillings per quarter for such as come by the quarter."

There were then no newspapers printed in the town, nor for thirty years afterwards.

Stephen Longfellow's father lived long enough to see his son fully entered upon a life of usefulness and honorable distinction; and when he died (Nov. 7, 1764), he left him a small legacy. "It is an evidence of the son's affectionate regard for his father, that, on receiving this legacy, he formed the purpose of converting it into a permanent memorial. Taking the silver coin, he sent it by packet to Boston; but, unfortunately, the vessel was lost, and the money with it. When the tidings reached Mr. Longfellow, he made up a like amount of silver coin, which reached Boston in safety, and was manufactured by John Butler, a well-known silversmith, into a tankard, a can, and two porringers. Each bore the initials "S. L." and the added words of grateful remembrance, "*Ex dono patris.*" The tankard has been preserved; and one of the porringers, after a somewhat eventful history, has found its way back into the family, and is now one of the treasures of the poet's brother, Alexander W. Longfellow."<sup>1</sup>

X When, on the 18th of October, 1775, Falmouth was bombarded and partially destroyed by the British soldiery, among the buildings to fall before the flaming element was the home of Stephen Longfel-

<sup>1</sup> Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and His Paternal Ancestry, by Rev. H. S. Burrage of Portland. A most admirable memoir, to which I stand much indebted throughout this chapter.

low.<sup>1</sup> The house was never rebuilt. The committee appointed to examine and liquidate the accounts of those who suffered in the burning of the town, having estimated and replaced his loss to the extent of £1,119, Mr. Longfellow, with other inhabitants of the town, including Parson Deane of the First Parish, removed to Gorham, Me., where he continued to reside until his death, which occurred May 1, 1790. In a brief sketch of his life Mr. Willis thus writes:—

“Mr. Longfellow filled many important offices in the town to universal acceptance. He was about fifteen years grammar-school master, town clerk twenty-two years, many years clerk of the proprietors of the common land, and from the establishment of the county in 1760 to the commencement of the Revolution in 1775 he was register of probate and clerk of the judicial courts. His handwriting, in beautiful characters, symbolical of the purity and excellence of his own moral character, is impressed on all the records of the town and county through many successive years.”<sup>2</sup>

To Stephen Longfellow, by his wife Tabitha were born three sons and one daughter.<sup>3</sup> Of these, William died in childhood; Samuel left no children;

<sup>1</sup> “October 16, a fleet of five or six vessels of war anchored at the Island with Mowat, a cat bomb ship, two cutter schooners and a small bomb sloop. On the 17<sup>th</sup>, they came up before the town, P.M.; sent word that in two hours they should fire upon the town, which was respited. On the 18<sup>th</sup>, at nine A.M. they began and continued until dark, with their mortars and cannon, when with marines landing, they burnt all the lower part of the town and up as far as Mr. Bradbury’s, excepting Mrs. Ross’ two houses, and son Thomas’ shop and stores, my house being included.” — *Smith’s Journal*, anno 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Note to his edition of *Smith’s Journal*, p. 118.

<sup>3</sup> Tabitha, who became the wife of Capt. John Stephenson in 1771.



and Stephen, the eldest, was born Aug. 3, 1750. In the early years of his manhood he became acquainted with Patience Young of York, and married her on Dec. 13, 1773. He lived in Gorham, and died there May 28, 1824.

During his life, Stephen Longfellow took an active part in the affairs of his town and county. Besides having been extensively employed as a surveyor, and having held several town offices, he had the honor of representing Gorham in the General Court of Massachusetts for eight years. For several years he was a senator from Cumberland County; and, from 1797 to 1811, he was judge of the Court of Common Pleas. There are still living not a few who remember with what dignity he was wont to be driven into Portland in an old square-top chaise, and, dismounting, made his way into the court-house under the escort of the sheriff. "He was a fine-looking gentleman, with the bearing of the old school; was erect, portly, rather taller than the average, had a strongly-marked face, and his hair was tied behind in a club with black ribbon. To the close of his life he wore the old-style dress, — knee-breeches, a long waistcoat, and white-top boots. He was a man of sterling qualities of mind and heart, great integrity, and sound common sense."

Of his children, STEPHEN LONGFELLOW, the second child, was born in Gorham, March 23, 1776. To him belongs the honor of having been the father of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the poet.

He was most carefully trained in his youth, and was evidently fitted by his parents for a professional

career. He early gave promise of the same intellectual strength which characterized his father and grandfather, and was sent to Harvard College in 1794. A college friend, two years his senior, said of him in later life, "He was evidently a well-bred gentleman when he left the paternal mansion for the university. He seemed to breathe the atmosphere of purity as his native element; while his bright intelligence, buoyant spirits, and social warmth, diffused a sunshine of joy that made his presence always gladsome." And another writer says, "that he was a favorite in his class is the testimony of his associates. But he went to college for other purposes than good-fellowship. He was an earnest, exemplary student. His scholarship entitled him to high rank; and, having completed the course, he left the university with a full share of its honors."

Mr. Longfellow was graduated from college in 1798 in the class with Judge Story and Dr. Channing; and, on returning home, he entered the law-office of Salmon Chase, who was an uncle of the late chief justice of the United States. Three years later he was admitted to the bar, and at once began to prosper in the midst of an extensive practice. In 1804, on the first of January, he married Zilpah,<sup>1</sup> the eldest daughter of Gen. Peleg Wadsworth, who was the son of Deacon Peleg Wadsworth of Duxbury, Mass., and was the fifth in descent from Christopher Wadsworth, who came from England and settled in

<sup>1</sup> By this marriage were born four sons and four daughters, — Stephen, Henry W. (the poet), Alexander W., Samuel, Elizabeth, Anne, Mary, and Ellen.

that town before 1632, and whose known descendants in the United States are now numbered by thousands.

The Peleg Wadsworth, jun., of military fame, was born at Duxbury, May 6, 1748; graduated at Harvard in 1769; and married, in 1772, Elizabeth Bartlett of the same town. Their children, through their mother and grandmother Wadsworth, who was Susanna Sampson, inherited the blood of five of the "Mayflower" pilgrims, including Elder Brewster and Capt. John Alden.<sup>1</sup>

X When was "fired the shot heard round the world," from the quiet meadows of Lexington and Concord, Peleg Wadsworth caught something of the inspiration of the hour, and was among the first to march in the defence of freedom. The tidings of the revolutionary struggle already begun speedily reached his native village; and Wadsworth at once set about raising a company of minute-men, of which, in September, 1775, he was commissioned captain by the Continental Congress then in session. In the following year he engineered in laying out the defences of Roxbury; was an aid on the staff of Gen. Ward when Dorchester Heights were occupied in March of the same year; and, in 1778, he was appointed adjutant-general of his State.

After the failure of the Bagaduce expedition in the ensuing year, the British pursued a system of outrageous plundering on the shores of Penobscot Bay and the neighboring coast, in which they were

<sup>1</sup> Memoir of Gen. Peleg Wadsworth, by Hon. William Good, from which I have borrowed freely in this chapter.

piloted and assisted by the numerous Tories who had gathered at Bagaduce and in the vicinity. In order to protect the people from this plundering, the Congress in 1780 ordered six hundred men to be detached from the three eastern brigades of the State, for eight months' service. The command of the whole eastern department, between the Piscataqua and St. Croix, was given to Gen. Wadsworth, with power to raise more troops if they were needed. He was also empowered to declare and execute martial law over territory ten miles in width, upon the coast eastward of Kennebec, according to the rules of the American army. His headquarters were established at Thomaston.

At the expiration of the term of service of the six hundred troops, Gen. Wadsworth was left with only six soldiers as a guard at his house. His family consisted of his wife, a son of five years of age, and a Miss Fenno of Boston, a particular friend of his wife. As soon as he was informed of Gen. Wadsworth's insecure position, Gen. McLane at Bagaduce sent forward a party of men for the purpose of making him a prisoner. They came in a vessel, and anchored four miles off. At midnight, on the 18th of February, 1781, they marched on foot to the Wadsworth residence, where they were met by a most determined resistance. During the encounter, Gen. Wadsworth was shot in the arm, and, finding himself completely overpowered, surrendered, and was hurried off to the vessel. He was taken across the bay to Castine, and retained as a prisoner in Fort George. His treatment during this confinement was

in every respect agreeable. Four months later Mrs. Wadsworth and Miss Fenno, with a passport from Gen. McLane, arrived at Bagaduce, and were politely entertained for ten days. "In the mean time," we are told, "orders had arrived from the commanding general at New York, in answer to a communication from Gen. McLane. Their purport was learned, from a hint conveyed to Miss Fenno by an officer, that the general was not to be exchanged, but would be sent to some English prison. When Miss Fenno left, she gave the general all the information she dared to. She said, 'Gen. Wadsworth, take care of yourself.' This the general interpreted to mean that he was to be conveyed to England, and he determined to make his escape from the fortress if possible. Soon after, a vessel arrived from Boston, with a flag of truce from the governor and council, asking for an exchange for the general, and bringing a sum of money for his use; but the request was refused."<sup>1</sup>

On the night of the 18th of June, Gen. Wadsworth and a fellow-prisoner, Major Burton, made their escape from the building in which they were confined, by passing through an opening made in the board ceiling with a gimlet. They evaded the sentinels, and finally got off in safety, arriving on the third day at Thomaston. Gen. Wadsworth was not a little amazed to learn that his family had left for Boston. He soon followed them, pausing for a while at Falmouth, where he finally fixed his residence.

How Gen. Wadsworth appeared at this time to his friends and family is evidenced by the following

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Goold, *Memoir* cited.



letter, dated "January, 1848," and written by his daughter Zilpah. It reads, —

"Perhaps you would like to see my father's picture as it was when we came to this town (Falmouth) after the war of the Revolution in 1784. Imagine to yourself a man of middle size, well proportioned, with a military air, and who carried himself so truly that many thought him tall. His dress a bright scarlet coat, buff small clothes and vest, full ruffled bosom, ruffles over the hands, white stockings, shoes with silver buckles, white cravat bow in front; hair well powdered, and tied behind in a club, so called. . . . Of his character others may speak, but I cannot forbear to claim for him an uncommon share of benevolence and kind feeling."

Gen. Wadsworth settled in Falmouth in 1784; and in December of that year he purchased, for one hundred pounds lawful money, the lot of land in Falmouth on which he erected his home. In the deed the purchase is described as "lying north-east of a lot now possessed by Capt. Arthur McLellan, being four rods in front, and running towards Back Cove, and containing one and one-half acres, being part of three acres originally granted to Daniel Ingersoll, as appears on the records of the town of Falmouth, Book No. 1, p. 46." <sup>1</sup>

While he was building his house, the general and his family resided in a building which belonged to Capt. Jonathan Paine.<sup>2</sup> It was originally con-

<sup>1</sup> "This is the Congress-street lot on which he erected his house and store." — *Goold*.

<sup>2</sup> This house stood on what is now the south corner of Franklin and Congress Streets.

structed for a stable, but had previously been tenanted by certain families resident in the town. The house which Gen. Wadsworth chose to erect was unlike others belonging to that period. "There had then been no attempt in the town to construct all the walls of a building of brick — indeed, there had been no suitable brick for walls made here. At that time brick buildings were expected to have a projecting base of several courses, the top one to be of brick fashioned for the purpose, the outer end of which formed a regular moulding when laid on edge and endwise; and the walls receded several inches to the perpendicular face. Several houses besides Gen. Wadsworth's were commenced in this way. In the spring of 1785 the general obtained brick for his house in Philadelphia, including those for the base, and a belt above the first story. John Nichols was the master mason."

The house was not finished until after the second spring; and that it was "thoroughly built," and not inartistic in its external appearance, all who look upon it to-day will bear testimony. No other brick house was erected in the town until three years later. "The Wadsworth house when originally finished had a high pitched roof of two equal sides, and four chimneys. The store adjoined the house at the south-east, with an entrance-door from the house, and was of two stories. Here the general sold all kinds of goods needed in the town and country trade. His name appears in the records with some forty others, as licensed 'retailers' of the town in 1785. What time he gave up the store is uncertain."



In 1792 Gen. Wadsworth was elected to the Massachusetts Senate, and in the same way he was also chosen to represent the Cumberland district in Congress. He held the last-named position until 1806, when he declined a re-election. Two years before his election to Congress, the general purchased from



Wadsworth House.

the State of Massachusetts 7,500 acres of wild land in the township on the Saco River now known as Hiram. He paid \$937.50 for the property, or twelve and a half cents per acre. As early as possible he began to clear a farm on a large scale, and with what success appears from the following paragraph in "The Eastern Herald" of Sept. 10, 1792, published in Portland:—

“Gen. Wadsworth thinks he has raised more than one thousand bushels of corn this season, on burnt land, that is now out of danger of the frost, at a place called Great Ossipee, about thirty-six miles from this town. This is but the third year of his improvements.”

Three years after this successful result had been thus reported, the general settled his son, Charles Lee Wadsworth, on the farm, and in 1800 began preparations with the view of removing thither himself with all his family. In the same year he commenced building a large house on the land, which house is still standing one mile from Hiram Village. We are told that “the clay for the bricks of the chimneys was brought down Saco River three miles in a boat. This house was of two stories, with a railed outlook on the ridge between the two chimneys. There was a very large one-story kitchen adjoining, with an immense chimney and fireplace. Years after its building, the general’s youngest son, Peleg, said, that, at the time of the erection of the house, he was seven years old, and was left by his father to watch the fires in the eleven fireplaces, which were kindled to dry the new masonry, while he rode to the post-road for his mail, and that he had not felt such a weight of responsibility since.

The Wadsworth family began housekeeping in their new house on New Year’s Day, 1807; and the general and his son Charles at once engaged in the arduous duties of lumbering and farming. He never was so busy, however, that he could not lend his services in the public interest. In 1812 he was

chosen selectman of the town, and continued to fill the office until 1818. For twelve successive years he was also the town treasurer. "He was a magistrate, and was looked upon as the patriarch of the town. He was a patron of education, and his home was the central point of the region for hospitality and culture. He was long a communicant of the Congregational Church, and so continued until his death at the age of eighty-one."

Gen. Wadsworth died in 1829, having been bereft of his devoted wife four years before. The graves of the aged couple are still pointed out in a private enclosure on the home farm, but the original modest headstones have been replaced by a marble monument of more pretentious appearance.

Of the children of Gen. Wadsworth, of whom there were eleven, the following is the record: The eldest was born at Kingston, Mass., in 1774, and died in the next year at Dorchester. Charles Lee was born at Plymouth in January, 1776, and died at Hiram (72 years) on Sept. 29, 1848. Zilpah, the eldest daughter, was born at Duxbury, Jan. 6, 1778, and died in Portland, March 12, 1851. Elizabeth, born in Boston, Sept. 21, 1779, died in Portland, Aug. 1, 1802. John, born at Plymouth, Sept. 1, 1781, was graduated at Harvard in 1800, and died at Hiram, Jan. 22, 1860. Lucia, born at Plymouth, June 12, 1783, died in Portland, Oct. 17, 1864. Henry, born at Portland, Me., on June 21, 1785, died at Tripoli, Sept. 4, 1804. George, born in Portland, Jan. 6, 1788, died in Philadelphia, April 8, 1816. Alexander Scammell, born in Portland, May 7, 1790, died at

Washington, April 5, 1851. Samuel Bartlett, born in Portland, Sept. 1, 1791, died at Eastport, Oct. 2, 1874. Peleg, born in Portland, Oct. 10, 1793, died at Hiram, Jan. 17, 1875.

Two of the sons of the general were officers in the United States Navy. At the age of nineteen, Henry became a lieutenant, and served in Commodore Preble's squadron before Tripoli in 1804. The story of his lamented death is told in the inscription on a marble cenotaph erected by his father to his memory, now visible in the Eastern Cemetery in Portland.<sup>1</sup> It was from this gallant young officer,

<sup>1</sup> This cenotaph is near the graves of the captains of the Enterprize and Boxer, and bears the following inscriptions:—

[S. W. FACE.]

In memory of  
HENRY WADSWORTH,  
— son of —  
PELIG WADSWORTH,  
Lieut. U. S. Navy,  
— who fell —  
Before the walls of Tripoli  
on the eve of 4th Sept.,  
— 1804 —  
in the 20th year of his age  
by the explosion of a  
— fire ship —  
which he with others  
gallantly conducted  
against the Enemy.

[N. E. FACE.]

My country calls,  
This world adieu:  
I have one life,  
That life I give  
for you.

[S. E. FACE.]

Determined at once  
they prefer death and  
the destruction of  
— the Enemy —  
to captivity and torturing  
slavery.  
Com. Preble's  
letter.

[N. W. FACE.]

"An honor to his  
country  
and an example to  
all excellent  
youth."  
Resolve of Congress.

Capt. Richard Somers,  
Lieut. Henry Wadsworth,  
Lieut. Joseph Israel,  
and 10 brave seamen  
volunteers  
were the devoted  
band.

his uncle, that the poet Longfellow received his name. The other son, Alexander Scammell, of heroic distinction, was second lieutenant of the frigate "Constitution" at the time of her memorable battle in August, 1812, in which she captured the British frigate "Guerriere." So well did he acquit himself that his fellow-townsmen of Portland presented him with a sword for his gallantry. Lieut. Wadsworth afterwards rose to the rank of commodore.

The eldest daughter of Gen. Wadsworth is reported to have "performed her part in life as bravely, and died as much beloved and honored, as did her gallant brothers of the navy." At the time when her father moved into the brick house in Portland, Zilpah was eight years of age, and bore nobly the "inconveniences and discomforts of the unfinished quarters in which they lived while the house was building." In June, 1799, the first uniformed company in Maine was organized at Portland; and Zilpah Wadsworth had the honor to present a military standard to the company, in behalf of the ladies of the town. On one side of the flag was the motto, "Defend the laws," and the arms of the United States; on the reverse, the same arms united with those of the State of Massachusetts.

In 1804 Gen. Wadsworth and his family were residing, as has already been stated, in the brick house which he had erected in Portland; and here it was, probably, that Stephen Longfellow, having already met and loved Zilpah, was united to her in marriage on the first of January of that year. For one year after their marriage the young couple



resided at the Wadsworth mansion. The next year they removed to a small two-story wooden house, still standing on the south corner of Congress and Temple Streets, immediately opposite the First Parish Church; and here it was that they began their first housekeeping. At the same period of time, a rich merchant of Portland, Samuel Stephenson, was living in the large square wooden house, yet standing on the corner of Fore and Hancock Streets. His wife, Abigail Longfellow, was a sister of Stephen; and, as her husband had been suddenly called to the West Indies on a matter of business, she invited her brother, with his family, to spend the winter of 1806-7 with her. Thus it was, that, temporarily, the young lawyer changed his abiding-place, and became a resident in a house that henceforth and for all time was to be remembered as the birthplace of a poet.

After the departure of the family of Gen. Wadsworth to Hiram, Stephen Longfellow removed to the brick house, and thenceforth made it his permanent home. The old store, where the general had sold so many goods, was at once moved out of the way; and in its place was built the brick vestibule at the east corner, over which was placed a modest sign, bearing the words, "Stephen Longfellow, Counsellor-at-Law." The eastern front-room was occupied for the law-office; and within this office, it should be noted, "several young students read 'Coke and Blackstone,' who afterwards became prominent lawyers of Cumberland County."

In 1814 Stephen Longfellow was sent to the



Legislature of Massachusetts, and during his term of service he was also chosen a member of the celebrated Hartford Convention. It was just after his return home that occurred the following incident. "While Mrs. Longfellow was indisposed, and the family physician was in attendance, the servant overheated the kitchen flue, which took fire, and communicated it to the attic, which the family knew nothing of until it broke out through the roof. Mr. Longfellow was the chief fire-ward of the department; but his first thought was of his sick wife, whom he hastily inquired for of Dr. Weed. He told Mr. Longfellow to look to the fire, and he would take care of his wife. When it became evident that the house must be flooded, the doctor, who was a tall, muscular man, wrapped Mrs. Longfellow in a blanket, and carried her in his arms into Madame Preble's, the next door,—now the hotel. After it had nearly destroyed the roof, the fire was extinguished. To give accommodation to his increasing family, Mr. Longfellow shortly afterwards added a third story to the house; and in place of the original high, two-sided one, he had built a low four-sided or 'hipped' roof, with the chimneys the same." As thus repaired, "the venerable structure around which so much of historical interest clusters has remained to the present time."

It remains for us now simply to trace the events of Stephen Longfellow's noble and useful life to its close. Thenceforth he was largely the servant of his fellow-townsmen. In 1816 he was chosen a presidential elector, and in 1822 was elected a mem-

ber of the Eighteenth Congress. At the close of his term of office he retired altogether from political affairs, and resolved to devote the remaining years of his life to the practice of his profession. He was not lost sight of, however, whenever work for which he was eminently fitted was to be performed. When Lafayette visited Portland, in 1825, it was Mr. Longfellow who gave him the address of welcome. The task was most gracefully executed, and drew out from the valiant Frenchman the following equally graceful allusion to Mr. Longfellow. "While I offer," said Lafayette, "to the people of Portland, and to you, gentlemen, my respectful thanks, I am happy to recognize in the kind organ of their kindness to me the member of Congress who shared in the flattering invitation which has been to me a source of inexpressible honor and delight."

Mr. Longfellow served as a trustee of Bowdoin College from 1817 to 1836, and received the degree of Doctor of Laws from the same institution in 1828. He was recording secretary of the Maine Historical Society from 1825 to 1830, and in 1834 he was elected president of the society. On the 3d of August, 1849, at the age of seventy-four, his life came to a peaceful close. "No man," says Mr. Willis in his "Law, Courts, and Lawyers of Maine," "more surely gained the confidence of all who approached him, or held it firmer; and those who knew him best loved him most. In the management of his causes, he went with zeal and directness of purpose to every point which could sustain it. There was no travelling out of the record with

him, nor a wandering away from the line of his argument after figures of speech or fine rhetoric; but he was plain, straightforward, and effective in his appeals to the jury, and by his frank and cordial manner won them to his cause." "Such in public life," says another writer, "was the father of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. In the domestic circle the noble traits of his character were no less apparent. His home was one of refinement and the purest social virtues; and she who shared its direction with him not only adorned it with rare womanly grace, but gave to it many an added charm."

## CHAPTER II.

## BIRTH AND EARLY CHILDHOOD.

*(1807-1821.)*

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW, second son of Stephen and Zilpah Longfellow, was born in Portland, Me., on the 27th of February, 1807.

At the time of this interesting and now memorable event, the parents were, as we have already observed, sojourning for a season in the house of Capt. Samuel Stephenson, situated on that part of Fore Street fronting the beach, east of India Street, near where the paternal grandfather had lived just previous to the burning of the town by Mowatt in 1775. For a long time this had been recognized as the fashionable locality of the town, and not a few of the most prominent people in the town were dwellers along the line of this beach. As far back as 1632, the spot had been settled by George Cleaves; and, for nearly two centuries afterwards, it commanded a fine view of the harbor, the cape, and the islands of Casco Bay. But since, with the flight of years, the scene has been altered; the beach has disappeared; and the waters of the harbor have been pushed farther out, by the land made for the extension of

the tracks of the Grand Trunk Railway, whose engine-house now occupies the site of Fort Loyal, captured by the French and Indians in 1690. The garrison was carried captive through the wilderness to Montreal, the objective point of the railroad whose trains now start from the same spot.

The house in which the future poet was born is still standing on its ancient site at the corner of



▼Longfellow's Birthplace as it appears in 1882.

Fore and Hancock Streets ; and it is a matter of congratulation, that, in the great conflagration which swept the city in 1866, this famous building escaped the devouring element. The house was built by one Campbell, who afterwards became known as a truckman. Forty years ago it was occupied by the late Jedediah Dow, on the Hancock-street side, and the

late Joshua Emery in the part fronting on the beach. The accompanying illustration exhibits the house just as it appears to-day, and, with one exceptional feature, just as it always appeared to the passer-by. The projection, which is seen on one corner, on the front, is an addition of latter years, built for the accommodation of a shop in the basement or cellar. But now the old mansion has seen its best days: the weight of years has told somewhat heavily on its skeleton, and its airy rooms are now tenanted by several families.<sup>1</sup>

We know not what signs prognosticated the birth of the young infant, whose name and fame were destined to become household words throughout the civilized world. But we may assume that they were all auspicious, even though no one could divine in them prospects of future greatness. It was fortunate for any child to have been born of such parentage, and amid such surroundings. In the family circle centred all those traits of culture and refinement, and those pure social virtues, which can but impart strength to infancy, and inspire youth. On the one hand was a father of well-trained and well-balanced mind, not old in years, but yet experienced in good works, a prominent member of the bar, and in the enjoyment of the respect of his

<sup>1</sup> The house in which the poet was born is known to all the school-children in Portland. One day, not long since, a teacher in one of the public schools, after giving divers lessons on Longfellow's beautiful life, asked her pupils if any of them knew where the poet was born. A little hand went up in a hurry; and a small voice piped forth, "in Patsey Connor's bedroom," — Master Connor being now one of the occupants of the old Longfellow house.



fellow-townsmen. ] On the other hand, a mother who shared with her husband all fair and noble traits, and who was still further adorned with a rare womanly grace, an evenness and gentleness of temper, and an affectionate regard for whatever is best in life. To such parents, a child, even though he were the second, could not have come unbidden; and, such being the case, it was not possible for him not to have combined in his own nature much that was admirable and common to both. If, in form and figure and in physiognomy, there was much that reminded of his mother, and of the Wadsworth side of the house, there were not wanting evidences of those marked qualities of mind and person which had so forcibly characterized his paternal ancestry through many generations. When it came time to bestow a name, the mother's heart went out tenderly towards that gallant brother, Lieut. Henry Wadsworth, who, before Tripoli, surrendered his life while bravely serving his country; and in token of him, his uncle, was the infant named.

When the spring season had fairly opened, Stephen Longfellow moved his family into the brick house built by Gen. Wadsworth, and which the latter had forsaken not many weeks before. In this grand old mansion the child Henry Wadsworth Longfellow spent the early years of his youth.

He had scarcely attained the age of five years, when it was determined, in the home circle, that he should be put to school. At that time the modern kindergarten was unknown, and not yet had school-masters and school-dames become conscious of the

fact that pleasures and pastimes are potent auxiliaries in a course of mental training. Not far from the home of the Longfellows, in Spring Street, just above High Street, stood a small brick schoolhouse, presided over by Ma'am Fellows, a most exemplary lady, who had "taught school" for many years, and had grown gray in the practice of rigid discipline. She was a firm believer in the idea that "one should never smile in school-hours," and she exercised her views on this topic very much to the terror of the young striplings who were placed under her charge. "My recollections of my first teacher," said the poet, after the lapse of threescore and ten years, "are not vivid: but I recall that she was bent on giving me a right start in life; that she thought that even very young children should be made to know the difference between right and wrong; and that severity of manner was more practical than gentleness of persuasion. She inspired me with one trait, — that is, a genuine respect for my elders."

For some reason, — it is forgotten what, — the boy did not long remain a pupil of Ma'am Fellows; and, after the first vacation, he was sent by his parents to the town-school on Love Lane, now Centre Street, where he remained just a fortnight. He was then placed in a private school, presided over by Nathaniel H. Carter, which was kept in a small, one-story wooden building on the west side of Preble Street, near Congress. He continued to be a pupil at this school until Mr. Carter became an instructor in the Portland Academy, at which time he attracted many of his old pupils, including Henry Wadsworth, to

his new field of labor. In those days, colleges were few, and academies numerous; and of these New-England academies, at which those at East Hampton, Andover, and Exeter still survive to attest to what we have lost, a deservedly prominent one was that at Portland. Thither was young Longfellow transferred to be prepared for college,—at first under the direction of Mr. Carter, and subsequently under the head-master, Mr. Bezaleel Cushman, a graduate of Dartmouth College, who assumed charge of the academy in 1815, and occupied the position upwards of twenty-six years. Mr. Cushman afterwards became one of the editors of “The New-York Evening Post,” and, during a sojourn in Europe, furnished to its columns a brilliant series of letters,—then as distinguishing a feature of metropolitan journalism as their absence would be at the present day. Another teacher, to whom belongs the honor of having imparted to the future poet many valuable lessons, was the late Mr. Jacob Abbott, at that time an usher in the academy, and an apprentice in the art of school-teaching.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jacob Abbott was born at Hallowell, Me., Nov. 14, 1803. He graduated from Bowdoin College in the class of 1820; studied theology at Andover from 1822 to 1824; was tutor at Amherst College in 1824-5; and was appointed professor of mathematics in the same institution in 1825, and held the position until 1829; became principal of the Mount Vernon School (for young ladies) in Boston in 1829, and remained there until 1834. During the next two years he was pastor of the Eliot Church in Roxbury. Mr. Abbott's reputation as an author was established by the “Young Christian” series, begun in 1825; but he is best known as the author of the “Rollo” books (28 volumes), and other stories for youth, some of which have been translated into the various languages of Europe and Asia. His death occurred on Oct. 31, 1879.

Under such inspiring teachers, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's progress was rapid ; and in 1821 he was able to enroll his name as a freshman in Bowdoin College. He was then in the fourteenth year of his age ; and the fact of his being ready at such an age for college, though not unprecedented, was early, even for that time, when colleges were less exacting and boys more precocious than now.

Already had the boy given evidences that led others to the expectation that his would be a literary career. While yet in his ninth year, he wrote his first verses. There is a tradition that his master wanted him to write a composition, a task from which the boy very naturally shrank.

"You can write words, can you not?" asked the teacher.

"Yes," was the response.

"Then, you can put words together?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then," said the instructor, "you may take your slate, and go out behind the schoolhouse, and there you can find something to write about ; and then you can tell what it is, what it is for, and what is to be done with it ; and that will be a composition."

Henry took his slate and went out. He went behind Mr. Finney's barn, which chanced to be near ; and, seeing a fine turnip growing up, he thought he knew what that was, what it was for, and what would be done with it.

A half-hour had been allowed young Henry for his first undertaking in writing compositions. Within

the prescribed time he carried in his work, all accomplished, and surprised his teacher.<sup>1</sup>

When the boy was barely thirteen years of age, and still a pupil at the Portland Academy, he composed a bolder effort, which is still preserved in manuscript, entitled "Venice, an Italian Song." The manuscript is dated "Portland Academy, March 17, 1820," and is signed with the full name of the writer.

The first published poem of young Longfellow was on "Lovewell's Fight." It was composed while he was attending the academy, and just after he had been reading an account of the French and Indian war. Having written it to his taste, and copied it neatly on a fresh sheet of paper, it suddenly occurred to him that it was worthy of being printed. The young author had never yet seen aught of his compositions in type; and, unlike many writers of later day, he was extremely shy about making a beginning. But the persuasion of one of his schoolfellows overcame his modesty; and so, late on a certain evening, he mustered up courage to go and drop the manuscript into the editorial-box of one of the two weekly newspapers then published in the town. He waited patiently for the next issue of the paper, and was not a little chagrined to find, that, when it did appear,—the poem was left out. The weeks flew by, and still the poem remained unpublished. In a fit of disgust, the young author repaired to the editorial

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Owen first related to me this anecdote. The poem, however, is not in existence; though what purports to be the poem (a composition of recent date and by other hands) is, I observe, afloat in the newspapers.



sanctum, and demanded the return of the manuscript. The request was granted; and Longfellow then carried it to the editor of the rival newspaper, — “The Portland Gazette,” — by whom it was accepted and published. Thenceforth the poet was at liberty to print in the columns of the journal whatever he might happen to write; nor did he permit the opportunity to slip by unimproved.<sup>1</sup>

And now, for a few moments, let us glance at some of the surroundings of the young poet. It is interesting at all times to note the early surroundings of a great man, whatever may be the field of his greatness; and especially is this true of a great poet, who has woven into his verses, as has Longfellow, so many recollections of his boyhood. The year 1807 is not only illustrious on account of the birth of Longfellow: it was also a year of marked events in the history of the place of his birth. It witnessed the beginning of many things whose influence impressed the mind of Longfellow, and still remains with the people of the town. In this year was also born another poet in Portland, — the late Nathaniel P. Willis;<sup>2</sup> in the same year, the Rev. Edward Payson began, as the colleague of Rev. Elijah Kellogg, his

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Longfellow was exceedingly fond of this theme, and once told me that he intended sometime to write on it again. Several amusing incidents grew out of our search for an old ballad on Lovewell's Fight, which he was very anxious to obtain. I shall allude to these in a later chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Nathaniel Parker Willis was born in Portland, Jan. 20, 1807. Removed to Boston, where he attended the Latin School, and subsequently Phillips Academy at Andover; was graduated from Yale College in the class of 1827. He then entered upon that literary career which gave him fame and fortune, and which he continued almost to the close of his life. He died Jan. 20, 1867.



wonderful pastorate of twenty years in Portland; in the same year, the third parish meeting-house, in which the late Rev. Dr. Dwight so long officiated, was built. But perhaps the most memorable event of all others was the fact that the commerce of Portland, which had gone on increasing with giant strides for a period of more than ten years, and had



The Old Wharf.

at length reached a high state of prosperity, suddenly fell, in 1807, under the crushing stroke of the embargo, and caused ruin and disaster throughout the entire community. It was the culmination of a period of great prosperity, and the beginning of a season of adversity, ending in the calamities of war. Navigation fell off nine thousand tons in two years:

all the various classes to whom it gave support were thrown out of employment, and many large houses were forced to suspend payment. The greatest distress prevailed everywhere, and "the grass literally grew upon the wharves."

Five years later came the second war with England, which, for the time being, gave a slight impulse to activity. Several privateers were fitted out, companies were organized, and fortifications were thrown up on Munjoy's Hill, at the north-eastern extremity of the Neck, and garrisons were established in them. Here begin the recollections of the poet, then a boy of six years of age, as recorded in his poem of "My Lost Youth."

"I remember the bulwarks by the shore,

And the fort upon the hill;

The sunrise gun, with its hollow roar,

The drum-beat repeated o'er and o'er,

And the bugle wild and shrill.

And the music of that old song

Throbs in my memory still:

'A boy's will is the wind's will,

And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.'"

On Sept. 4, 1813, "The Boxer," British brig of war, Capt. S. Blythe, was captured off the Maine coast by the American brig "Enterprise," Lieut. W. Burrows, and on the morning of the seventh was brought into Portland Harbor. On the next day both commanders, who had been killed in the encounter, were buried with imposing and impressive ceremonies in the cemetery at the foot of Munjoy's

Hill. The poet thus records his recollection of this solemn event : —

“I remember the sea-fight far away,  
How it thundered o’er the tide !  
And the dead captains, as they lay  
In their graves, o’erlooking the tranquil bay,  
Where they in battle died.”

Peace came in 1815, and not before this event did the town fully recover from the hardships occasioned by the embargo. For several years afterwards, prosperity and the population increased slowly but surely. In the year 1800, there were 3,704 inhabitants in the town; in 1810, they had increased to 7,169; and in 1820, there were but 8,581. It is in this little town of barely 8,000 inhabitants that we have now to picture to ourselves as the scene of Longfellow’s boyhood, —

“The beautiful town  
That is seated by the sea.”

It lay chiefly on the narrow peninsula, or “Neck,” in the depression between the two hills which mark its extremities, — Munjoy Hill and Bramhall. Within the space of two centuries, the ground had become historic. It was a pleasant site, not then, as now, hemmed in by new-made land encroaching on the sea. It commanded a full view of the waters of the bay, and those

“Islands that were the Hesperides  
Of all my boyish dreams.”

Almost in front of the birthplace of the poet, and skirting the road on the seaward side, lay the beach, the scene of many a baptism on a sabbath-day. But it was not here that the poet spent his boyhood; for, with the growth of the town, his parents moved on,



Birthplace of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

and, at a later period, established themselves in what is now the heart of the city.

With the revival of commerce after the war, trade with the West Indies sprang up; and "low-decked brigs carried out cargoes of lumber and dried fish, bringing back sugar, rum, and molasses." The discharging of a full cargo was wont to set the whole town in an uproar, and the wharves (chiefly Long

Wharf and Portland Pier) "resounded with the songs of the negro stevedores hoisting the hogsheads from the hold without the aid of a winch: the long trucks with heavy loads were tugged by straining horses, under the whips and loud cries of the truckmen. Liquor was lavishly supplied to laboring men, and it made them turbulent and uproarious."

A well-known author, who has done not a little to unfold the glories and to preserve the old-time recollections of his native State (the Rev. Elijah Kellogg),<sup>1</sup> has given us the following lively picture of Portland at this time, on a winter morning: —

"Then you might have seen lively times. A string of board-teams from George Libby's to Portland Pier; sleds growling; surveyors running about like madmen, a shingle in one hand and a rule-staff in the other; cattle white with frost, and their nostrils hung with icicles; teamsters screaming and hallooing; Herrick's tavern and Huckler's Row lighted up, and the loggerheads hot to give customers their morning-dram."

Of such scenes as these, and of others which commingled with them, the poet sings, —

"I remember the black wharves and the slips,  
And the sea-tides tossing free;  
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,  
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,  
And the magic of the sea."

<sup>1</sup> Now known as the author of the "Elm Island" stories, the "Pleasant Cove" series, the "Whispering Pine" series, etc. His story of Good Old Times abounds in pleasant pictures of life in the early days in the State of Maine, and, though written for young people, will be heartily enjoyed by older readers.



At this time also, Portland had quite a lumber-trade; and, as if this were not enough to cause a tumult, it had furthermore its distilleries and tanneries and ropewalks and a pottery. The two last impressed themselves on the mind of the boy Longfellow, and, after many years, suggested to him the poem of "The Ropewalk," whose familiar stanzas begin as follows: —

"In that building, long and low,  
With its windows all a-row,  
Like the port-holes of a hulk,  
Human spiders spin and spin,  
Backward down their threads so thin  
Dropping, each a hempen bulk.  
. . . . .  
All these scenes do I behold,  
These, and many left untold,  
In that building long and low;  
While the wheel goes round and round,  
With a drowsy, dreamy sound,  
And the spinners backward go."

Also the poem "Keramos," —

"Turn, turn, my wheel! Turn round and round  
Without a pause, without a sound;  
So spins the flying world away!"

But let us go back over threescore years, and look farther into the heart of the "dear old town." In Middle Street, blocks of brick stores have already begun to take the place of the dwelling-houses, where once lived many of the gentry of the town. Market Square is, on all sides, surrounded by small wooden shops; and on the left, as we enter the



square, stands Marston's tavern, to which Mowatt was taken as a prisoner by Col. Thompson and his men, in June, 1775. Not far off, in the centre of the square, stand the hay-scales, and next to them the market-house, and, just beyond, a small row of wooden shops, terminating in "a heater," nearly opposite the head of Preble Street. At the corner of Preble Street stands the brick mansion, surrounded with a spacious garden, of the widow of Commodore Edward Preble, the hero of Tripoli; and adjacent, "somewhat back from the village street," is the brick house built by Gen. Wadsworth, and, since 1807, occupied by Stephen Longfellow, Esq. This is the home—not the birthplace, be it remembered—of the future poet.

In front of these mansions, extending from Preble nearly to Brown Street, is the wood-market, "where the teams, loaded with cord-wood brought in from the country, stand, beneath the shade of a row of trees, with a railing between them and the sidewalk. The patient oxen feed upon the hay thrown upon the ground, while the wood-surveyor measures the loads, and the teamsters bargain with the townsmen." Not far off stands "The Freemasons' Arms," the tavern erected by Thomas Motley, grandfather of Thomas Lothrop Motley, the historian of the Netherlands. At this time, however, Motley is dead; and the tavern is kept by Sukey Barker. A short distance beyond Motley's, Oak Street enters Main Street; and in the former thoroughfare we catch a glimpse of a grove of thrifty red-oaks: and next beyond is Green Street, which leads down to Deering's Woods, where for

generations the boys of Portland have gathered acorns, and of which the poet sings, —

“ And Deering’s Woods are fresh and fair ;  
And with joy that is almost pain  
My heart goes back to wander there,  
And among the dreams of the days that were,  
I find my lost youth again.”

Coincident with the progress of commercial enterprise was the growth of literature. Parson Thomas Smith had already jotted down his quaint observations on life in Falmouth, and later generations were perusing them with more than ordinary interest. His associate and colleague, the Rev. Dr. Deane, had, in 1790, published his “Georgical Dictionary,” which was now the authority in all matters pertaining to agriculture. The same author had also sung the praises of “Pitchwood Hill” in verse. In 1816, however, occurred the literary event in Portland, which was long to be remembered, namely, the publication of Enoch Lincoln’s poem of “The Village,” of upwards of two thousand lines, “remarkable for its advanced moral sentiment, anticipating many of the reforms of our day, as well as for its erudition and its evenly sustained poetical merit.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Enoch Lincoln, a son of Levi Lincoln, was born in Worcester, Mass., in 1788. Studied at Harvard, became a lawyer in 1811, and settled at Fryeburg, Me., — the scenery of which beautiful forest-town he described in his poem of *The Village*, published in 1816. He was a member of Congress from 1818 to 1826, and governor of Maine from 1827 to 1829. He delivered a poem at the centennial celebration of the Lovewell’s Pond Fight, was a warm friend of the Indians, and left behind him valuable historical manuscripts. He died Oct. 8, 1829.

Education was advancing, and "a number of young men were coming upon the stage of action who were to shed the lustre of letters upon the town." Among these were Nathaniel Deering, born in Portland in 1791, whose five-act tragedies — "Carabassett" and "Bozzaris" — have been much admired; John Neal, born in 1793, whose vigorous poem, "The Battle of Niagara," was published in 1816, and awakened much enthusiasm; and Grenville Mellen, born in Biddeford in 1799, who came to Portland during his early manhood. Among these elders walked the boy Longfellow, interested in what they produced, and profiting by what they taught, who would yet outstrip them all.

In social life democratic ideas were prevalent, not alone in matters of dress, but also of etiquette. "Cocked hats, bush wigs, and knee-breeches are passing out, and pantaloons have come in. Old men still wear cues and spencers, and disport their shrunken shanks in silk stockings. A homely style of speech prevails among the common people. Old men are 'daddies,' old ladies are 'marms,' shipmasters are 'skippers,' and school-teachers are 'masters.' There are no stoves, and open fires and brick ovens are in universal use. The fire is raked up at night, and rekindled in the morning by the use of flint, steel, and tinder-boxes. Nearly every house has its barn, in which is kept the cow, pastured during the day on Munjoy. The boys go after the cows at nightfall, driving them home through the streets. There are few private carriages kept in town, and fewer public vehicles.

“The coin in circulation is chiefly Spanish dollars, halves, quarters, pistareens, eighths, and sixteenths, — the latter two of which are known as ninepence and fourpence ‘alf-pennies.’ Federal money is so little recognized that prices are still reckoned in shillings and pence, — two and six, three and ninepence, seven and sixpence.

“It is a journey of two days, by the accommodation stage, to Boston, costing eight to ten dollars. If you go by the mail-stage, you may be bounced through, with aching bones, in the hours between two o’clock in the morning and ten at night; or you may take a coaster, and perhaps be a week on the passage.”

There were two newspapers published in the town, — “The Portland Gazette” and “The Eastern Argus,” — both appearing once a week. Amusements were scarce, and not before 1820 were theatrical performances sanctioned. In the summer season well-to-do people went on excursions among the islands, and occasionally there was a capsizing with loss of life. During the winter sleighing-parties drove out to “Broad’s” for a dance and a supper. At such times hearts were merry; and, it is no secret, flip and punch flowed freely, rendering sobriety the exception and not the rule.

Such was “the beautiful town that is seated by the sea;” and such were the scenes to which the thoughts of the poet go back, in after years, with a man’s love for the haunts of his childhood.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I am under deep obligation to my friend, Mr. Edward H. Elwell of The Portland Transcript, who has permitted me to make

Here he recalled the sports of boyhood, and found his "lost youth again."

In passing, I must not forget to mention at least one of the friends and associates of Longfellow's early boyhood,—his cousin, John Owen. He was born in Portland in 1806, and, with Longfellow, attended the school of Ma'am Fellows, also the Portland Academy. They were subsequently students together in Bowdoin College; though they were not in the same class, Owen being a member of the class of 1827.

After his graduation, Owen came to Cambridge and studied divinity. He never preached much, however, and soon made choice of a business, in preference to a professional career. In 1834 he entered into the book business in Cambridge, and in 1836 became sole proprietor, his former partners having sold out their interest in the same. He failed in 1848, and the store (which, by the way, was on the corner of Holyoke and Main Streets where a jeweller's shop now stands) went back into the hands of its original proprietors. Thenceforth Mr. Owen spent his time almost wholly in study and literary pursuits, at the same time doing what he could to improve and adorn the spacious grounds that surrounded his home.

The intimacy existing between the poet and his friend Owen was lifelong: indeed, the relation of friendship was a bond of union more like that which

free use of the very interesting memoir on The Portland of Longfellow's Youth, which he wrote and published at the time of the Longfellow birthday celebration.

has subsisted between Emerson and Alcott. Longfellow was the gentlest of poets; and doubtless the chief attraction for him in the society and companionship of his cousin lay in Mr. Owen's gentle and amiable traits of character.

In the course of these memoirs, I shall have occasion to quote freely Mr. Owen's recollections of that unalloyed friendship which extended over nearly three-quarters of a century. He it was who best knew and appreciated the poet's onward march to fame, was the mild counsellor in all his work, and the trusted Achates to whom he might repair in times of trial and perplexity for sympathy and encouragement.



## CHAPTER III.

## COLLEGE DAYS.

*(1821-1825.)*

IN his anonymous prose romance called "Fanshawe,"<sup>1</sup> a book, by the by, which more nearly approaches a novel than any of his later works, Hawthorne has pictured some of the aspects of the college at Brunswick. He says, —

"From the exterior of the collegians, an accurate observer might pretty safely judge how long they had been inmates of those classic walls. The brown cheeks and the rustic dress of some would inform him that they had but recently left the plough to labor in a not less toilsome field. The grave look, and the intermingling of garments of a more classic cut, would distinguish those who had begun to acquire the polish of their new residence; and the air of superiority, the paler cheek, the less robust form, the spectacles of green, and the dress in general of

<sup>1</sup> Fanshawe was published three years after Hawthorne's graduation, in Boston, by Marsh & Capen; but "so successful was Hawthorne in his attempt to exterminate the edition, that not half a dozen copies are now known to be extant." It is affirmed to be "a faint reflection from the young Salem recluse's mind of certain rays thrown across the Atlantic from Abbotsford." For further particulars the reader is referred to *A Study of Hawthorne*, by G. P. Lathrop, Boston, 1876.

threadbare black, would designate the highest class, who were understood to have acquired nearly all the science their Alma Mater could bestow, and to be on the point of assuming their stations in the world. There were, it is true, exceptions to this general description. A few young men had found their way hither from the distant seaports; and these were the models of fashion to their rustic companions, over whom they asserted a superiority in exterior accomplishments, which the fresh, though unpolished, intellect of the sons of the forest denied them in their literary competitions. A third class, differing widely from both the former, consisted of a few young descendants of the aborigines, to whom an impracticable philanthropy was endeavoring to impart the benefits of civilization.

“If this institution did not offer all the advantages of elder and prouder seminaries, its deficiencies were compensated to its students by the inculcation of regular habits, and of a deep and awful sense of religion, which seldom deserted them in their course through life. The mild and gentle rule was more destructive to vice than a sterner sway; and, though youth is never without its follies, they have seldom been more harmless than they were here. The students, indeed, ignorant of their own bliss, sometimes wished to hasten the time of their entrance on the business of life; but they found, in after-years, that many of their happiest remembrances, many of the scenes which they would with least reluctance live over again, referred to the seat of their early studies.”

It is noted by his biographer, that, in the passages above quoted, Hawthorne "divides the honors pleasantly between the forest-bred and city-trained youth, having, from his own experience, an interest in each class; yet I think he must have sided, in fact, with the country boys."<sup>1</sup>

The father and great-grandfather of the poet were graduates of Harvard College. It may seem a little singular, that, with this precedent, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow should have been sent to Bowdoin College. At the beginning of the century the college at Brunswick was scarcely known, except to its incorporators; and it was not until 1802 that the first class was admitted. The first graduating class numbered seven: and among the students of this period were Charles S. Davies, subsequently an eminent lawyer; and Nathan Lord, for many years president of Dartmouth College.<sup>2</sup>

In 1819 the second president of Bowdoin died; and the Rev. William Allen, a graduate of Harvard, and at the time president of Dartmouth, was chosen as his successor. In many respects his administration was a memorable one, and "into his retirement he carried the respect and esteem which are the desert of sincere and laborious service. His term of service was highly fruitful." Dr. Shepley says of him, that he "performed well the duties of his station. He may have been a little too unbending, have passed a student without recognition, or unde-

<sup>1</sup> A Study of Hawthorne, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> See an interesting article on Bowdoin College, in Scribner's Monthly for May, 1876, written by Mr. G. T. Packard.

sirably mistaken a name or person. His hymn-book was one of those mistakes of which no good account can be given. He was nevertheless a scholar, a gentleman, a friend of the students, an able preacher, and an efficient helper of ministers and churches. The incidents of his administration, both at Bowdoin and previously at Dartmouth, were full of interest; involving, as they did, the investigation of great questions, calling into service the best legal talent in the country, and issuing in judicial decisions important to all educational and charitable corporations.”<sup>1</sup>

Associated with him in the several departments were John Abbott, A.M., a graduate of Harvard, the professor of languages; Parker Cleaveland, “in ability and brilliancy not excelled by any college officer of his time,” who filled the chair of mathematics and natural philosophy; the Rev. William Jenks, the professor of the Oriental and English languages; and Samuel P. Newman, whose department was that of Greek and Latin until 1824, when he was succeeded in the same department by Alpheus S. Packard, who since 1819 had been a tutor in the institution. Professor Packard—still living—has been a member of the faculty since the last-mentioned date,—sixty-three years. Addressed to his old teacher were certain lines in Longfellow’s “*Morituri Salutamus*,” a poem prepared for the semi-centennial of his class, and recited by him in

<sup>1</sup> I quote from a valuable paper on the class of '25 in Bowdoin College, read by the Rev. Dr. David Shepley of Providence, R.I., at a meeting of Congregational ministers in October, 1875. Dr. Shepley was a classmate of Longfellow at Bowdoin College. His death occurred in November, 1881.

1875. After speaking of the teachers who had led their "bewildered feet through learning's maze," the poet continues, —

"They are no longer here: they all are gone  
Into the land of shadows, — all save one.  
Honor and reverence, and the good repute  
That follows faithful service as its fruit,  
Be unto him, whom living we salute."

By far the most noted, if not the most beloved, of all the Bowdoin professors, was Parker Cleaveland, who, after fifty-three years of faithful work, was stricken down at his post in 1858. In the sphere of his teaching and oversight he was truly the "genius of the place;" while distinguished honors from home and abroad testified to the important work of "the Father of American Mineralogy," as he was often termed. It is related that "an accident directed Professor Cleaveland's special attention to the study of mineralogy. Some laborers, in blasting near the river, upturned what looked like gold and precious stones, and hurried to the professor's room with their treasure. To their anxious inquiry he returned a diplomatic response, being in doubt as to the quality of the specimens, and subsequently forwarded the minerals to Professor Dexter of Harvard University, who confirmed Professor Cleaveland's analysis, and, in return, sent to Bowdoin selections from his own cabinet. At a felicitous moment, Professor Cleaveland printed a work on mineralogy, which was warmly praised by leading scientists in this country and in Europe. Humboldt, Sir David Brew-

ster, Sir Humphry Davy, Baron Cuvier, the Abbé Haiiy, and many others, welcomed him to the fraternity of investigators; and invitations to teach in the leading colleges of the country showed the home appreciation of his remarkable abilities. Nor did the professor pass by the science of chemistry: in that department, likewise, he was a proficient. Besides the regular lectures in college, he gave courses of popular addresses, fully illustrated, in the towns of the State. A slight drawback to these scientific excursions deserves to be recorded. The professor's apparatus was moved from town to town by a yoke of oxen. His appearances, therefore, were few and far between; and these visits of enlightenment were finally abandoned."

It is of this "grand old teacher" that Longfellow speaks in a sonnet written during his visit to Brunswick in the summer of 1875:—

"Among the many lives that I have known,  
None I remember more serene and sweet,  
More rounded in itself and more complete,  
Than his who lies beneath this funeral stone.  
These pines, that murmur in low monotone,  
These walks frequented by scholastic feet,  
Were all his world; but in this calm retreat  
For him the teacher's chair became a throne.  
With fond affection memory loves to dwell  
On the old days, when his example made  
A pastime of the toil of tongue and pen;  
And now, amid the groves he loved so well  
That naught could lure him from their grateful shade,  
He sleeps, but wakes elsewhere, for God hath said,  
‘Amen!’"





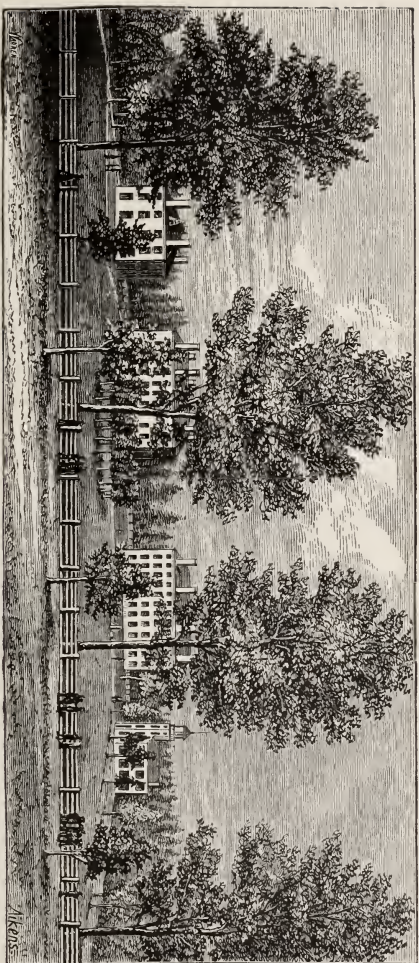
PROFESSOR CLEAVELAND ON THE LECTURE-PATH.

With such men as teachers,—all of them well equipped, and in love with their work,—it is not to be wondered at that the attractions of Bowdoin College were such as to induce so many of the best families in the State of Maine to send their sons thither. To be sure, the college at Brunswick was young and poor, and not widely known; but it had a great and grand future before it, and the day was soon to dawn when it should send forth graduates whose fame would reach round the civilized world. Its growth was rapid, but at the same time healthful. In 1802 the college embraced but one building, in which, for a time, all the officers and students were sheltered, and the chapel and recitation-rooms were located. Five or six years later Maine Hall was erected, and the process of augmentation and increase went steadily on; so that, at about the close of the first quarter of the present century, the institution presented an outward view in every way respectable.

It was in September, 1821, that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, together with his elder brother Stephen, entered the freshman class in Bowdoin College. The former was just in the last half of his fifteenth year, and at this time was, as remembered by one of his teachers, “an attractive youth, with auburn locks, clear, fresh, blooming complexion, and, as might be presumed, of well-bred manners and bearing.”<sup>1</sup>

And one of his classmates thus writes: “I remember him (Longfellow) distinctly as of fresh, youthful appearance, as uniformly regular and studious in

<sup>1</sup> Professor A. S. Packard, still living in Brunswick, Me.



BOWDOIN COLLEGE IN 1830.

his habits, rather disinclined to general intercourse, maintaining a high rank as a scholar, and distinguished especially for the excellence of his compositions, as was Hawthorne also. Such was his temperament that it appeared easy for him to avoid the unworthy.”<sup>1</sup>

Still another says, “When I first became acquainted with Longfellow, just after we had been dismissed from a recitation in Greek, I thought him very unsocial; but further acquaintance showed to me that what I had mistaken for indifference, and an unwillingness to form new friendships, was merely a natural modesty. I soon found him to be one of the truest of friends.”<sup>2</sup>

One who was not intimate with him in college, but was yet a member of the same class, informs us, that, “in his recitations, he was rather slow of speech, and appeared absorbed, but was almost always correct, if not *always*. He stood high. I should judge he must have been amiable in his social intercourse, never aggressive, but well calculated to secure friends.”<sup>3</sup>

At the time when Longfellow entered Bowdoin College, the class numbered forty-four members; and most of these were born and reared in the State of Maine. The average age was from fifteen to sixteen, though some of the students had already attained their twenty-fourth birthday. While a few had been prepared for the collegiate course by private instruct-

<sup>1</sup> Charles Jeffrey Abbott, Esq., of Castine, Me.

<sup>2</sup> Horatio Bridge, Esq., of Washington, D.C.

<sup>3</sup> Professor Nathaniel Dunn of New-York City.



ors, by far the majority came from well-recognized and well-known schools of a preparatory order. It is remembered, that at least one came from Phillips Academy at Andover, and quite a number from Phillips Academy at Exeter. More than half had been previously taught by Mr. Cushman at the Portland Academy; and the remainder had emanated from schools at Gorham, Saco, Hallowell, Augusta, and Monmouth.

“The fitting given at Andover and Exeter,” says one of the members of the class of 1825, “was excellent. The noble, hard-working, youth-loving men at other locations named (I love to praise them), knew well that their pupils needed more than they had time or means to do for them. For what they did, they deserved admiration; for what they did not do, they were not themselves accountable. They were ready to impart their own clothing to a needy student. They cared for their pupils while with them, and after they had gone, as if they had been their own sons.”<sup>1</sup>

It has often been remarked, that the days of youth are the happiest in human life; and equally true is it, that the years spent in college are the most memorable. The attachments formed during our student-career are never forgotten: other and later friends may come to us, time and space may intervene; but those who together with us endeavored to climb high up the ladder of learning forever linger in our memories, — their names and their faces are with us always. Those who were students a half-century

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Dr. Shepley.

ago will more readily understand this assertion, perhaps, than those who are but recent graduates. In the earlier time, our colleges were fewer, and perhaps poorer, and the classes were never large; to-day, colleges are many, the endowments are liberal, and in many cases the classes number many members. Formerly a student could know and associate with all of his fellow-students; now it frequently happens that no student is acquainted with more than half the members of his class, while perhaps he has never been intimate with more than a limited few. It is not difficult to find the reason for the last-named circumstance.

In the days of which I write, much interest was felt in the progress and growth of the college at Brunswick, especially so by "the best citizens of Maine, who talked of it, planned for it, and were oft seen in its halls." To be sure, it was neither the oldest, nor indeed the best, collegiate institution in America; and, because of its moderate means, the college could not afford the services of a large corps of instructors. But, with perhaps a single exception, such teachers as held positions at Bowdoin were men of unqualified worth, and most excellent ability. They were not afraid of work, and they were devoted to all who came under their charge. If they had a fault, it was that of bestowing too much time, and too varied service, for too little money. But their records live after them!

And now let us glance hastily at some of the members of the Bowdoin class of 1825. A more remarkable class never gathered under an American college



roof-tree. "When we think," says the venerable Professor Packard, writing in the present year, "of the distinction that has crowned the class of 1825, a teacher may be charged with singular lack of discrimination and interest in his pupils, who is compelled to confess how scanty are his particular reminiscences of its members; and this for the plain reason, that no one knew, or even dreamed it may be, how famous some of them were to become. I think it is a tradition that Luther—if not he, some renowned German teacher—used to doff his hat reverently when he entered his schoolroom. On being asked why he did so, 'Because,' said he, 'I see in my pupils future burgomasters and syndics of the city.' . . . Were we blind, and dull of appreciation, that we did not forecast, during those four years, two lives—one in the front seat of the class-room, and one in the third seat back—which were to have names in the prose and poetry of the ages, lasting as the language in which their genius found expression?"

Nor indeed is it surprising that future greatness was not forecasted in a single instance. It may have been said, at the time, that they who attained the highest rank in college were the men to be heard of again in after-life. But it is interesting to examine farther the assertion. "Little always held the first place. Four, well entitled to do it, came next. About seven, now in order, were perhaps in merit not very unequal, and, with the usages of the present day, might not have been distinguished from each other. The same may have been substantially true of each

of two companies of seven that followed ; and I must not fail to say, that, of those who took no part in the exercises of commencement, several had been disclosed as more than ordinary men.”<sup>1</sup>

As is often the case, several members of the class might easily have reached a higher rank if they had been more thoroughly prepared, or had been more mature ; or others, if they had studied more diligently. Some were scarcely distinguished at all during their college-days, though it was not because they did not wish to be ; and of these quite a number achieved renown in subsequent life.

It is never fair to judge any class by the standard of its freshman year ; for not yet have the students become fully impressed with that sense of duty to themselves and justice to others which maturer experience in college almost always affords. The self-consciousness of the yearling, it matters not where he may be found, is strongly marked, and only proves him to be as yet little more than a boy. During his second and third years, he begins to realize what he is doing, and for what, and to cast his eyes outside of the college precincts, and to reflect on what may possibly await him there in “the years yet to come.”

It was during the sophomore year that signs of future greatness began to manifest themselves. The college societies, or clubs, afforded ample opportunities for the display of talent : and it appeared then that Bradbury, Cilley, Benson, and Little were to be among the statesmen of the future ; that Dean was the metaphysician ; Weld and Mason, the nat-

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Dr. Shepley.

uralists; and Cheever and Pierce, after Longfellow and Hawthorne, the "experts in *belles-lettres*." The future poet was Mellen, not Longfellow who at this time had the credit of "writing verses only as a pastime." Poor Dean died just before graduation day, thus rendering sorrowful what must otherwise have been a most joyous event.

Of those who foreshadowed prominence in later life, I must mention Josiah L. Little, who came to Bowdoin from Exeter, thoroughly trained, strong in body, and keen in intellect: at recitations he was always "prepared." His death occurred in 1862, but not until he had honorably filled many important civil and political stations.

Jonathan Cilley was a "chum" of Little at Exeter, and was equally well fitted. The record of his life is tinged with sadness. In his youth he possessed "unquestionable genius; and had he not indulged in habits, not vicious, but still expensive of time, into which he was drawn by his fine social qualities, instead of about the ninth place, he might easily have taken the second, possibly the first." Cilley graduated with his class, and immediately began the study of the law. He rose rapidly in the estimation of the public, was sent to Congress, and there gained the reputation of being one of the readiest debaters. In one of his congressional speeches, he offended the editor of "The New-York Courier and Exchange," and was challenged to fight a duel. Cilley declined on the ground that the challenger was not a gentleman: whereupon Mr. Graves, a member of Congress from Kentucky, took the chal-

lenger's place; and to this arrangement Mr. Cilley assented. On a bleak day the duel was fought with rifles; and Cilley, like Hamilton before him, fell dead, leaving his adversary unharmed. Mrs. Cilley "could not survive the shock, and three young children were left in the world without father or mother."

George B. Cheever was another one of the coterie in which young Longfellow moved, and found the joys of friendship. Cheever, from early childhood, had studied Edmund Burke; though he was also said to lay "hold on all books within his reach." The librarian of the college once remarked, "It is fifty dollars damage to the library every time a theme is assigned to Cheever. He searches every book on every shelf." The diligent, careful, and conscientious student still lives to enjoy the reputation of an able preacher, author, and champion of temperance. It certainly is much to his credit that he was long spoken of as "the Gideon of the anti-slavery campaign."

In the same class was John S. C. Abbott, the historian; J. W. Bradbury, eminent in law and politics; and Nathaniel Hawthorne, the genius of American romance. A classmate writes of Hawthorne, that "he utterly neglected many of the studies of the regular course; and, as he would not study, he could not at recitations show the fruit of his study. Failure in the classroom, however, did not disturb him; nor did it materially detract from the respect in which he was held, both by professor and classmates. It was soon found that he was not to be judged or

dealt with by ordinary standards; that he had read much; that his mind was enriched by its own creations; that he was, in a sense, already an accomplished scholar. In the social circle his was apt to be a silent presence; but it was a presence ever eagerly sought, and, somehow, marvellously magnetic. He never seemed to think of asking himself how he compared with his fellows. In their thoughts he was always above and never beneath. He was near, yet distant; had intimacies, but intimates knew only in part. In subsequent life, in reference to a certain locality in England, he writes, 'Here a man does not seem to consider what other people will think of his conduct, but only whether it suits his own convenience to do so and so.' And he adds, 'This may be the better way.' When he was in college, he may have seemed to be of the mind here indicated; only it never suited his convenience to do any thing with which his associates were not obstinately bent on being pleased. He had no liking for any of the professions, and, it is probable, left college without any definite plans for life."<sup>1</sup>

Such was Hawthorne, — confessedly the laggard member of the class of 1825, and yet withal one of the most prominent in making that class famous. In college he was the friend, though never the intimate, of Longfellow. In after-life the relation became intimate, and continued so to the last.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Dr. Shepley.

<sup>2</sup> Among the students at Bowdoin during the course of Longfellow and his classmates may be mentioned: William Pitt Fessenden of the class of '23, successively a member of the Maine Legislature, a member of Congress, United-States senator, Secretary



Longfellow, in college, was not unlike many others in his class. From the beginning to the close of those halcyon days, his career was singularly uneventful. When he entered upon his junior year, his old schoolmate at the Portland Academy (John Owen) entered the class of 1827 ; and it is his testimony, that while the excursions which they together made back into the country were as frequent as those, which, in former times, they had made to Deering's Woods, never was Longfellow guilty of any lawless escapades, or even of those wild, hilarious sports which were by no means uncommon among his fellows.

"I shall never forget," says Mr. Owen, whose recollections are among the most valuable that we have, whether bearing upon the earlier or later life of the poet, — "I shall never forget one of the visits which I paid to my old school-friend just after the

of the Treasury in President Lincoln's administration, and again United-States senator; John P. Hale of the class of '27, a member of the State Legislature of New Hampshire, district-attorney for that State under Presidents Jackson and Van Buren, member of Congress, member of the Legislature, and Speaker of the House of Representatives, United-States senator, in 1852 the Free-Soil candidate for Vice-President of the United States, and United-States minister to Spain under President Lincoln; Franklin Pierce of the class of '24, member of the New-Hampshire Legislature, and Speaker, member of Congress, United-States senator, a brigadier-general during the Mexican War, and elected President of the United States in 1852; Sergeant Smith Prentiss of the class of '26, the lawyer and orator, member of the Mississippi Legislature, member of Congress, and distinguished by his eloquence, and for his love and knowledge of literature ; and Calvin E. Stowe of the class of '24, professor of languages in Dartmouth, of biblical literature in Lane Seminary, Cincinnati, divinity professor in Bowdoin, and professor of sacred literature in Andover Theological Seminary, a well-known author and educator, and husband of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe.



opening of my sophomore year. It was in the month of October, and on a sabbath evening. After some hours spent over my books, I called at his room late in the evening. I found him in an old arm-chair, with a copy of Shakspeare — an English copy, if I remember rightly — lying on his lap, and over that a sheet of paper, on which he had been writing, in a clear, legible, and neat hand, which he has always preserved, some inspiration of the moment. The object of my visit was twofold: first, to obtain some information with regard to one of the instructors; and secondly, to renew our friendship. He received me most cordially, and at once told me he was jotting down some verses. We went over again, in pleasant talk, the experience of the ballad on ‘Lovewell’s Fight;’ and I suggested that perhaps poesy was not his forte.

“‘Let me read you something,’ he remarked, without directly responding to my playful jest. And he began with the lines, —

“‘When first in ancient time, from Jubal’s tongue  
The tuneful anthem filled the morning air,  
To sacred hymnings and elysian song  
His music-breathing shell the minstrel woke.  
Devotion breathed aloud from every chord:  
The voice of praise was heard in every tone,  
And prayer and thanks to him, the Eternal One,  
To Him, that with bright inspiration touched  
The high and gifted lyre of heavenly song,  
And warmed the soul with new vitality.’

“‘You see, I have a cold,’ he added, ‘and could not go to devotional exercises. But I must do something in keeping with the day.’

“I replied that I was but a poor judge of the quality of verse, and that, if he called what he had read to me *poetry*, I would assume that it was. But I could not refrain from adding, that it was much too grand to be popular. He read me more of the poem, and then laid it aside unfinished. Towards the Christmas holidays he showed me the poem, completed, published in one of the periodicals of the time. He had sent it to the editor of ‘The United-States Literary Gazette,’ and, in return, had been credited with a year’s subscription.”

The same qualities of mind and person which so strongly characterized the poet in his later life, and rendered him dear to whomsoever he encountered, were already formed in his earlier career. As a youth, he was invariably social, affable, genial, and polite. Though he was more fond of his books than of pastimes, and treasured time for what it could afford him for study, yet he was never so fully occupied with his own employments that he could not lend himself to others. He was known and recognized generally as one of the “well-to-do” men in college. Though never lavish with money, nor in any way inclined to that outward display which the possessor of money is so often led into, still he was thought to be well favored, and never to be in want, either of the necessities or of the luxuries of life. He was never known to refuse a contribution for any worthy object: no student ever came to him in distress and went away empty handed.

The following incident is related by one of the members of the class of 1826, and corroborated by

Mr. Owen: One day a student received notice from home, that owing to the death of his father, and the straitened condition of the family, it was not practicable for him longer to continue his studies at Bowdoin. This was sad news to the young man, for he cherished great hopes in regard to his future career; and already, by close application to duty, he was accounted one of the ablest and most promising of his class. His friend, the narrator of the anecdote, having been made acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, at once took counsel with Longfellow. Up to this time—the spring of 1825—Longfellow had contributed several poetical effusions to the columns of “The United-States Literary Gazette,” but had never asked for, nor received, any compensation. From “The Gazette” the poems had found their way into many of the daily and weekly press of the country; and the young poet, not without reason, began to think himself entitled to some pecuniary allowance, however small it might be. He wrote a note on the subject to the editor, Mr. Theophilus Parsons,<sup>1</sup> and received in return a plea of poverty, some well-chosen words of praise and gratitude, and—a copy of “Coleridge’s Poems.”

<sup>1</sup> Theophilus Parsons, son of the chief justice of the same name, was born at Newburyport, Mass., May 17, 1797; graduated at Harvard in 1815; studied law in the office of Judge William Prescott; visited Europe; practised law first in Taunton and later in Boston; was a frequent contributor to the pages of *The North-American Review* and other periodicals, and, in 1824, founded *The United-States Literary Gazette*; in 1847 he became the Dane professor of law in the Harvard Law School. Mr. Parsons wrote some fifteen volumes of legal treatises, also several works in support of the Swedenborgian, or “New Jerusalem,” Church. His death occurred only a few months ago.

This was, indeed, a disappointment; for Longfellow had counted on receiving a few paltry dollars, which it was his intention to present to his fellow-student in need. He was undaunted, however, and resolved to do what he could. Himself, his brother, and the narrator drew up a subscription-paper, put down on it such sums as each could afford, and then passed it round among the fellows. The college-men responded nobly; and enough was raised to carry the luckless, but deserving, object of the gift safely through his college-course. Just forty-one years from that date the same student called upon the poet at his home in Cambridge, and again thanked him for that "kindness, which had proved a fortune to himself." He added, that, having experienced "how blessed it is to receive," he had just founded a certain charity, — on condition that the name of the donor should never be made public, — and hoped to do even more at some future time.

"For some reason or other," says Mr. Owen, "the poet never liked to speak of this act of his earlier career. He and I have talked about it, to be sure; but one day he suggested that the subject be forever dropped. It was one of his peculiar habits, — always to be doing some one a favor, and to wish that it be kept a profound secret."

It has previously been stated that Longfellow did not begin full work at college until he had entered upon his sophomore year. From September, 1821, to Commencement, 1822, he pursued most of his studies at home, and at the same time managed to keep up with his class. In the autumn of 1822

he began his studies at Brunswick, and so also did one of his classmates, Hon. James W. Bradbury, now of Augusta. Hon. Mr. Bradbury thus speaks of his friend, after the lapse of sixty years:—

“I first knew Longfellow when I entered as a sophomore in the class of which he was a member, in 1822; and I like to think of him as I then knew him. His slight, erect figure, delicate complexion, and intelligent expression of countenance come back to me indelibly associated with his name.

“He was always a gentleman in his deportment, and a model in his character and habits. For a year or more we had our rooms out of college, and in the same vicinity; and I consequently saw much more of him than of many others of our class. I recollect, that, at our junior exhibition, a discussion upon the respective claims of the two races of men to this continent was assigned to Longfellow and myself. He had the character of King Philip, and I of Miles Standish. He maintained that the continent was given by the Great Spirit to the Indians, and that the English were wrongful intruders. My reply, as nearly as I can recall it, was, that the aborigines were claiming more than their equal share of the earth, and that the Great Spirit never intended that so few in number should hold the whole continent for hunting-grounds, and that we had a right to a share of it, to improve and cultivate. Whether this occurrence had any thing to do in suggesting the subject for one of his admirable poems, or not, one thing is certain, that he subsequently made a great deal more of Miles Standish than I did on that occasion.



“As a scholar, Longfellow always maintained a high rank in a class that contained such names as Hawthorne, Little, Cilley, Cheever, Abbott, and others. Although he was supposed to be somewhat devoted to the Muses, he never came to the recitation-room unprepared with his lessons.”

Another classmate, the Rev. David Shepley, D.D., of Providence, whose death preceded that of the poet by a few months, brings forward a similar tribute. He says, —

“Longfellow was more like his fellow-students, and more with them. Librarians, if not as intimate with him as with Cheever, still knew Longfellow. He gave diligent heed to all departments of study in the prescribed course, and excelled in all; while his enthusiasm moved in the direction it has taken in subsequent life. His themes, felicitous translations of Horace, and occasional contributions to the press, drew marked attention to him, and led to the expectation that his would be an honorable literary career; yet probably no one was sagacious enough to anticipate the extent and the depth of the reverential affection of which he has now for years been the object. Decided aversion to pretence and display distinguished him when in college, as it distinguishes him now.”

During Longfellow's sojourn at Brunswick, there was a musical club in college; and of this he was a prominent member. He was exceedingly fond of the “art divine,” and this passion remained with him through life; and the instrument which he professed to master was the flute. One cannot help



feeling that such an instrument was most appropriate to his genius, or fancying that "the echoes of that 'concord of sweet sounds' have floated down to us blending with the harmonious measures of his verse." When he was not engaged in study, or taking a part in the musical club, or off on some rural excursion, he would spend his time in the exercise of his poetic gift. Some of his sweetest short productions were written and published while he was in college, as will appear later on in this biography.

A classmate still cherishes a recollection of a poem which Longfellow wrote on the seasons, and after more than half a century remembers the lines, —

"Summer is past ; and autumn, hoary sire,  
Leans on the breast of winter to expire."

The Commencement programme of 1825 displays the following announcement : —

"Oration : Native Writers.  
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow,  
Portland."

The subject that was originally selected by the young poet was entitled "The Life and Writings of Chatterton;" but, at the eleventh hour, he changed his mind, and made choice of the theme on which he discoursed. In the programme, a copy of which is still preserved in the college library, the original title is erased, and "Native Writers" substituted in Professor Cleaveland's handwriting.

The fact that to Longfellow was assigned one of the three English orations, indicates his standing as

a scholar in college. His was the first claim to the poem; but, as the poem had no definite rank, it was thought due to him, since his scholarship bore a high mark, that he should receive an appointment which should place his scholarship beyond question. The class-poem was assigned to Frederic Mellen, "who was in reality more than an ordinary college-poet." It should not be forgotten, however, that Longfellow had the first claim as the poet of the class; for he had not only appeared publicly as a writer, but in November, 1824, during the first term of his senior year, had been chosen to pronounce the poem of the

Peucinian, one of the two leading societies in the institution.



Profile Portrait of Longfellow.

One of the last acts of a college-man in those days was to have his picture "taken." The art of photography was as yet undiscovered; but a "silhouette" artist was almost always to be found, and, by his art of handling paper and shears, the "class-pictures" were taken. When the class was graduated, Hawthorne alone, out of the whole number,

refused to have his profile cut in paper. But Longfellow was more thoughtful, though perhaps unconscious, of the demands of the future; and of his

profile I am fortunate in being able to exhibit a facsimile reproduction.

At the time of his graduation, Longfellow was nineteen years of age. So full of promise was his future, that, shortly after his graduation, he was chosen to fill the chair of modern languages and literature in the college, to endow which Madame Bowdoin some years before had given one thousand dollars as a corner-stone. But he was not asked to take the position before he had qualified himself for its duties.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE EARLIER POEMS OF LONGFELLOW.

(1824-1825.)

IN the elegant edition of his poems illustrated by Huntington and published by Carey and Hart, Philadelphia, in the year 1845, and in all subsequent editions, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow retained only seven of his "earlier poems;" namely, "An April Day," "Autumn," "Woods in Winter," "Hymn of the Moravian Nuns of Bethlehem," "Sunrise on the Hills," "The Spirit of Poetry," and "Burial of the Minnisink." To this list, Kettell, in his specimens of American poetry, published in 1829, adds "The Indian Hunter" and "The Sea-Diver."

George B. Cheever's "American Common-place Book of Poetry," Boston, 1831,—a most excellent selection,—contains all the seven poems which Mr. Longfellow thought worthy of preservation in his collected works, and adds only one other, "Earth with her Thousand Voices Praises God."

The seven poems above mentioned were but a small portion of those written by Longfellow in the period of his youth, or, rather, before his graduation from college. His earliest poems, as we have already observed, were published in one of the Portland

newspapers. As none of these are still preserved, — or, if existing, bear no signature, — it is impossible to say what were their titles. The poem on “Love-well’s Fight” appears to have vanished entirely; at least, many years’ search has failed to discover its whereabouts.

During his junior and senior years at Brunswick, Longfellow exercised his poetical genius quite often; and, of the poems which he produced, no less than seventeen were published in one of the short-lived periodicals of that day. Theophilus Parsons, himself a poet of some ability, and subsequently eminent in Massachusetts jurisprudence, had essayed the public taste with a hazardous literary venture, “The United-States Literary Gazette,” — a quarto of sixteen pages, and furnished to its regular subscribers in fortnightly numbers at the exceedingly low price of five dollars a year! “The Gazette” made its first appearance on the 1st of April, 1824; and one of the chief attractions was William C. Bryant, then just coming to his early fame, and who had been invited to fix his own price on such poems as he might choose to contribute. Mr. Bryant, after some hesitation, named two dollars a poem as a fair compensation. I have previously stated that the young collegian was no better paid. But Bryant was not the only poetical contributor to the columns of “The Gazette;” and among the others were Richard Henry Dana, James E. Percival, Rufus Dawes, Grenville Mellen, — the Bowdoin class-poet of 1825, — J. Athearn Jones, — nearly forgotten now, but once a writer of great promise and of no mean attainment, — George Lunt, Caleb Cushing, and N. P. Willis.

Longfellow had scarcely completed his eighteenth year when he ventured to send his first poem to the editor of "The Gazette." Inasmuch as an exact account of the dates of the appearance of this and the succeeding poems, together with the full text of the poems themselves, are not without interest, I have decided to reproduce them.<sup>1</sup>

The first poem published in "The Gazette" appeared in the issue of Nov. 15, 1824, and is as follows: —

#### THANKSGIVING.

WHEN first in ancient time, from Jubal's tongue  
The tuneful anthem filled the morning air,  
To sacred hymnings and elysian song  
His music-breathing shell the minstrel woke.  
Devotion breathed aloud from every chord:  
The voice of praise was heard in every tone,  
And prayer and thanks to Him, the Eternal One,  
To Him, that with bright inspiration touched  
The high and gifted lyre of heavenly song,  
And warmed the soul with new vitality.  
A stirring energy through Nature breathed:  
The voice of adoration from her broke,  
Swelling aloud in every breeze, and heard  
Long in the sullen waterfall, what time  
Soft Spring or hoary Autumn threw on earth  
Its bloom or blighting; when the Summer smiled;  
Or Winter o'er the year's sepulchre mourned.  
The Deity was there! a nameless spirit  
Moved in the breasts of men to do him homage;  
And when the morning smiled, or evening pale  
Hung weeping o'er the melancholy urn,

<sup>1</sup> All of the seventeen poems of Longfellow which first appeared in The United-States Literary Gazette were, with five others, reprinted in England by Richard Herne Shepherd, and published by Pickering & Co. of London.



They came beneath the broad, o'erarching trees,  
And in their tremulous shadow worshipped oft,  
Where pale the vine clung round their simple altars,  
And gray moss mantling hung. Above was heard  
The melody of winds, breathed out as the green trees  
Bowed to their quivering touch in living beauty;  
And birds sang forth their cheerful hymns. Below,  
The bright and widely wandering rivulet  
Struggled and gushed amongst the tangled roots  
That choked its reedy fountain, and dark rocks  
Worn smooth by the constant current. Even there  
The listless wave, that stole with mellow voice  
Where reeds grew rank on the rushy-fringed brink,  
And the green sedge bent to the wandering wind,  
Sang with a cheerful song of sweet tranquillity.  
Men felt the heavenly influence; and it stole  
Like balm into their hearts, till all was peace:  
And even the air they breathed, the light they saw,  
Became religion; for the ethereal spirit  
That to soft music wakes the chords of feeling,  
And mellows every thing to beauty, moved  
With cheering energy within their breasts,  
And made all holy there, for all was love.  
The morning stars, that sweetly sang together;  
The moon, that hung at night in the mid-sky;  
Dayspring and eventide; and all the fair  
And beautiful forms of nature, — had a voice  
Of eloquent worship. Ocean, with its tides  
Swelling and deep, where low the infant storm  
Hung on his dun, dark cloud, and heavily beat  
The pulses of the sea, sent forth a voice  
Of awful adoration to the spirit  
That, wrapt in darkness, moved upon its face.  
And when the bow of evening arched the east,  
Or, in the moonlight pale, the curling wave  
Kissed with a sweet embrace the sea-worn beach,  
And soft the song of winds came o'er the waters,  
The mingled melody of wind and wave

Touched like a heavenly anthem on the ear ;  
For it arose a tuneful hymn of worship.  
And have *our* hearts grown cold ? Are there on earth  
No pure reflections caught from heavenly light ?  
Have our mute lips no hymn, our souls no song ?  
Let him that in the summer day of youth  
Keeps pure the holy fount of youthful feeling,  
And him that in the nightfall of his years  
Lies down in his last sleep, and shuts in peace  
His dim, pale eyes on life's short wayfaring,  
Praise Him that rules the destiny of man.

SUNDAY EVENING, October, 1824.

In the number dated Dec. 1, 1824, appeared the following : —

AUTUMNAL NIGHTFALL.

ROUND Autumn's mouldering urn  
Loud mourns the chill and cheerless gale,  
When nightfall shades the quiet vale,  
And stars in beauty burn.

'Tis the year's eventide.  
The wind, like one that sighs in pain  
O'er joys that ne'er will bloom again,  
Mourns on the far hillside.

And yet my pensive eye  
Rests on the faint blue mountain long;  
And for the fairy-land of song,  
That lies beyond, I sigh.

The moon unveils her brow :  
In the mid-sky her urn glows bright,  
And in her sad and mellowing light  
The valley sleeps below

Upon the hazel gray  
The lyre of Autumn hangs unstrung,  
And o'er its tremulous chords are flung  
The fringes of decay.

I stand deep musing here,  
Beneath the dark and motionless beech,  
Whilst wandering winds of nightfall reach  
My melancholy ear.

The air breathes chill and free:  
A spirit in soft music calls  
From Autumn's gray and moss-grown halls,  
And round her withered tree.

The hoar and mantled oak,  
With moss and twisted ivy brown,  
Bends in its lifeless beauty down  
Where weeds the fountain choke.

That fountain's hollow voice  
Echoes the sound of precious things;  
Of early feeling's tuneful springs  
Choked with our blighted joys.

Leaves that the night-wind bears  
To earth's cold bosom with a sigh,  
Are types of our mortality,  
And of our fading years.

The tree that shades the plain,  
Wasting and hoar as time decays,  
Spring shall renew with cheerful days, —  
But not my joys again.

In the issue of Dec. 15, 1824, appeared the following: —

#### ITALIAN SCENERY.

NIGHT rests in beauty on Mont Alto.  
Beneath its shade the beauteous Arno sleeps  
In Vallombrosa's bosom, and dark trees  
Bend with a calm and quiet shadow down

Upon the beauty of that silent river.  
Still in the west a melancholy smile  
Mantles the lips of day, and twilight pale  
Moves like a spectre in the dusky sky,  
While eve's sweet star on the fast-fading year  
Smiles calmly. Music steals at intervals  
Across the water, with a tremulous swell,  
From out the upland dingle of tall firs;  
And a faint footfall sounds, where, dim and dark,  
Hangs the gray willow from the river's brink,  
O'ershadowing its current. Slowly there  
The lover's gondola drops down the stream,  
Silent, save when its dipping oar is heard,  
Or in its eddy sighs the rippling wave.  
Mouldering and moss-grown through the lapse of years,  
In motionless beauty stands the giant oak;  
Whilst those that saw its green and flourishing youth  
Are gone and are forgotten. Soft the fount,  
Whose secret springs the starlight pale discloses,  
Gushes in hollow music; and beyond  
The broader river sweeps its silent way,  
Mingling a silver current with that sea,  
Whose waters have no tides, coming nor going.  
On noiseless wing along that fair blue sea  
The halcyon flits; and, where the wearied storm  
Left a loud moaning, all is peace again.

A calm is on the deep. The winds that came  
O'er the dark sea-surge with a tremulous breathing,  
And mourned on the dark cliff where weeds grew rank,  
And to the autumnal death-dirge the deep sea  
Heaved its long billows, with a cheerless song  
Have passed away to the cold earth again,  
Like a wayfaring mourner. Silently  
Up from the calm sea's dim and distant verge,  
Full and unveiled, the moon's broad disk emerges.  
On Tivoli, and where the fairy hues  
Of autumn glow upon Abruzzi's woods,

The silver light is spreading. Far above,  
Encompassed with their thin, cold atmosphere,  
The Apennines uplift their snowy brows,  
Glowing with colder beauty, where unheard  
The eagle screams in the fathomless ether,  
And stays his wearied wing. Here let us pause.  
The spirit of these solitudes — the soul  
That dwells within these steep and difficult places —  
Speaks a mysterious language to mine own,  
And brings unutterable musings. Earth  
Sleeps in the shades of nightfall, and the sea  
Spreads like a thin blue haze beneath my feet;  
Whilst the gray columns and the mouldering tombs  
Of the Imperial City, hidden deep  
Beneath the mantle of their shadows, rest.  
My spirit looks on earth. A heavenly voice  
Comes silently: "Dreamer, is earth thy dwelling?  
Lo! nursed within that fair and fruitful bosom,  
Which has sustained thy being, and within  
The colder breast of Ocean, lie the germs  
Of thine own dissolution! E'en the air,  
That fans the clear blue sky, and gives thee strength,  
Up from the sullen lake of mouldering reeds,  
And the wide waste of forest, where the osier  
Thrives in the damp and motionless atmosphere,  
Shall bring the dire and wasting pestilence,  
And blight thy cheek. Dream thou of higher things:  
This world is not thy home!" And yet my eye  
Rests upon earth again. How beautiful  
Where wild Velino heaves its sullen waves  
Down the high cliff of gray and shapeless granite,  
Hung on the curling mist, the moonlight bow  
Arches the perilous river! A soft light  
Silvers the Albanian mountains, and the haze  
That rests upon their summits mellows down  
The austerer features of their beauty. Faint  
And dim-discovered glow the Sabine hills;  
And, listening to the sea's monotonous shell,



High on the cliffs of Terracina stands  
The castle of the royal Goth<sup>1</sup> in ruins.

But night is in her wane : day's early flush  
Glow's like a hectic on her fading cheek,  
Wasting its beauty. And the opening dawn  
With cheerful lustre lights the royal city,  
Where, with its proud tiara of dark towers,  
It sleeps upon its own romantic bay.

In the issue of Jan. 1, 1825, appeared the following : —

THE LUNATIC GIRL.

MOST beautiful, most gentle! Yet how lost  
To all that gladdens the fair earth; the eye  
That watched her being; the maternal care  
That kept and nourished her; and the calm light  
That steals from our own thoughts, and softly rests  
On youth's green valleys and smooth-sliding waters.  
Alas! few suns of life, and fewer winds,  
Had withered or had wasted the fresh rose  
That bloomed upon her cheek: but one chill frost  
Came in that early autumn, when ripe thought  
Is rich and beautiful, and blighted it;  
And the fair stalk grew languid day by day,  
And drooped — and drooped, and shed its many leaves.  
'Tis said that some have died of love; and some,  
That once from beauty's high romance had caught  
Love's passionate feelings and heart-wasting cares,  
Have spurned life's threshold with a desperate foot;  
And others have gone mad, — and she was one!  
Her lover died at sea; and they had felt  
A coldness for each other when they parted,  
But love returned again: and to her ear  
Came tidings that the ship which bore her lover  
Had suddenly gone down at sea, and all were lost.  
I saw her in her native vale, when high

<sup>1</sup> Theodoric.

The aspiring lark up from the reedy river  
Mounted on cheerful pinion; and she sat  
Casting smooth pebbles into a clear fountain,  
And marking how they sunk; and oft she sighed  
For him that perished thus in the vast deep.  
She had a sea-shell, that her lover brought  
From the far-distant ocean; and she pressed  
Its smooth, cold lips unto her ear, and thought  
It whispered tidings of the dark blue sea:  
And sad, she cried, "The tides are out! — and now  
I see his corpse upon the stormy beach!"  
Around her neck a string of rose-lipped shells,  
And coral, and white pearl, was loosely hung;  
And close beside her lay a delicate fan,  
Made of the halcyon's blue wing; and, when  
She looked upon it, it would calm her thoughts  
As that bird calms the ocean, — for it gave  
Mournful, yet pleasant, memory. Once I marked,  
When through the mountain hollows and green woods,  
That bent beneath its footsteps, the loud wind  
Came with a voice as of the restless deep,  
She raised her head, and on her pale, cold cheek  
A beauty of diviner seeming came;  
And then she spread her hands, and smiled, as if  
She welcomed a long-absent friend — and then  
Shrunk timorously back again, and wept.  
I turned away: a multitude of thoughts,  
Mournful and dark, were crowding on my mind;  
And as I left that lost and ruined one, —  
A living monument that still on earth  
There is warm love and deep sincerity, —  
She gazed upon the west, where the blue sky  
Held, like an ocean, in its wide embrace  
Those fairy islands of bright cloud, that lay  
So calm and quietly in the thin ether.  
And then she pointed where, alone and high,  
One little cloud sailed onward, like a lost  
And wandering bark, and fainter grew, and fainter,

And soon was swallowed up in the blue depths;  
And, when it sunk away, she turned again  
With sad despondency and tears to earth.

Three long and weary months — yet not a whisper  
Of stern reproach for that cold parting! Then  
She sat no longer by her favorite fountain:  
She was at rest forever.

In the number bearing date Jan. 15, 1825, the following beautiful effusion first saw the light of publicity. It is certainly one of the most poetical of Longfellow's earlier productions.

#### THE VENETIAN GONDOLIER.

HERE rest the weary oar! — soft airs  
Breathe out in the o'erarching sky;  
And Night — sweet Night — serenely wears  
A smile of peace: her noon is nigh.

Where the tall fir in quiet stands,  
And waves, embracing the chaste shores,  
Move o'er sea-shells and bright sands,  
Is heard the sound of dipping oars.

Swift o'er the wave the light bark springs,  
Love's midnight hour draws lingering near;  
And list! — his tuneful viol strings  
The young Venetian gondolier.

Lo! on the silver-mirrored deep,  
On earth, and her embosomed lakes,  
And where the silent rivers sweep,  
From the thin cloud fair moonlight breaks.

Soft music breathes around, and dies  
On the calm bosom of the sea;  
Whilst in her cell the novice sighs  
Her vespers to her rosary.

At their dim altars bow fair forms,  
In tender charity for those,  
That, helpless left to life's rude storms,  
Have never found this calm repose.

The bell swings to its midnight chime,  
Relieved against the deep blue sky.  
Haste! — dip the oar again — 'tis time  
To seek Genevra's balcony.

The issue of Feb. 1, 1825, contained the poem "Woods in Winter." As the most of this production is in the collected works, we omit it here.

In the issue of March 15, 1825, appeared the following: —

DIRGE OVER A NAMELESS GRAVE.

By yon still river, where the wave  
Is winding slow at evening's close,  
The beech, upon a nameless grave,  
Its sadly moving shadow throws.

O'er the fair woods the sun looks down  
Upon the many twinkling leaves,  
And twilight's mellow shades are brown  
Where darkly the green turf upheaves.

The river glides in silence there,  
And hardly waves the sapling tree:  
Sweet flowers are springing, and the air  
Is full of balm — but where is she!

They bade her wed a son of pride,  
And leave the hopes she cherished long:  
She loved but one, and would not hide  
A love which knew no wrong.

And months went sadly on — and years;  
And she was wasting day by day:  
At length she died — and many tears  
Were shed, that she should pass away.

Then came a gray old man, and knelt  
With bitter weeping by her tomb;  
And others mourned for him, who felt  
That he had sealed a daughter's doom.

The funeral-train has long past on,  
And time wiped dry the father's tear.  
Farewell, lost maiden! — there is one  
That mourns thee yet, — and he is here.

In the issue of April 1, 1825, appeared the following poem : —

#### A SONG OF SAVOY.

As the dim twilight shrouds  
The mountain's purple crest,  
And summer's white and folded clouds  
Are glowing in the west,  
Loud shouts come up the rocky dell,  
And voices hail the evening-bell.

Faint is the goatherd's song,  
And sighing comes the breeze;  
The silent river sweeps along  
Amid its bending trees;  
And the full moon shines faintly there,  
And music fills the evening air.

Beneath the waving firs  
The tinkling cymbals sound;  
And, as the wind the foliage stirs,  
I feel the dancers bound  
Where the green branches arched above,  
Bend over this fair scene of love.



And he is there, that sought  
My young heart long ago!  
But he has left me — though I thought  
He ne'er could leave me so.  
Ah! lovers' vows — how frail are they!  
And his — were made but yesterday.

Why comes he not? I call  
In tears upon him yet:  
'Twere better ne'er to love at all,  
Than love, and then forget!  
Why comes he not? Alas! I should  
Reclaim him still, if weeping could.

But see — he leaves the glade,  
And beckons me away:  
He comes to seek his mountain maid!  
I cannot chide his stay.  
Glad sounds along the valley swell,  
And voices hail the evening-bell.

The issue of April 15, 1825, contained the first acknowledged poem, entitled "An April Day," which, with a few slight changes, appears in the collected works. It is here omitted.

In the issue of May 15, 1825, was published the following: —

#### THE INDIAN HUNTER.

WHEN the summer harvest was gathered in,  
And the sheaf of the gleaner grew white and thin,  
And the ploughshare was in its furrow left,  
Where the stubble land had been lately cleft,  
An Indian hunter, with unstrung bow,  
Looked down where the valley lay stretched below.

He was a stranger there, and all that day  
Had been out on the hills, a perilous way:

But the foot of the deer was far and fleet,  
And the wolf kept aloof from the hunter's feet;  
And bitter feelings passed o'er him then,  
As he stood by the populous haunts of men.

The winds of autumn came over the woods,  
As the sun stole out from their solitudes;  
The moss was white on the maple's trunk,  
And dead from its arms the pale vine shrunk;  
And ripened the mellow fruit hung, and red  
Were the tree's withered leaves round it shed.

The foot of the reaper moved slow on the lawn,  
And the sickle cut down the yellow corn;  
The mower sung loud by the meadow-side,  
Where the mists of evening were spreading wide;  
And the voice of the herdsman came up the lea,  
And the dance went round by the greenwood tree.

Then the hunter turned away from that scene,  
Where the home of his fathers once had been,  
And heard, by the distant and measured stroke,  
That the woodman hewed down the giant oak;  
And burning thoughts flashed over his mind  
Of the white man's faith, and love unkind.

The moon of the harvest grew high and bright,  
As her golden horn pierced the cloud of white:  
A footstep was heard in the rustling brake,  
Where the beech overshadowed the misty lake,  
And a mourning voice, and a plunge from shore,  
And the hunter was seen on the hills no more.

When years had passed on, by that still lakeside,  
The fisher looked down through the silver tide:  
And there, on the smooth yellow sand displayed,  
A skeleton wasted and white was laid;  
And 'twas seen, as the waters moved deep and slow,  
That the hand was still grasping a hunter's bow.

The poem, "Hymn of the Moravian Nuns of Bethlehem," was printed in "The Gazette," June 1, 1825, and is retained in the collected works. The poem, "Sunrise on the Hills," appeared July 1, 1825, and is still retained. Both of these poems are here omitted.

On the 1st of August, 1825, appeared the following : —

### JECKOYVA.

[The Indian chief, Jeckoyva, as tradition says, perished alone on the mountain which now bears his name. Night overtook him whilst hunting among the cliffs; and he was not heard of till after a long time, when his half-decayed corpse was found at the foot of a high rock, over which he must have fallen. Mount Jeckoyva is near the White Hills.]

THEY made the warrior's grave beside  
The dashing of his native tide;  
And there was mourning in the glen —  
The strong wail of a thousand men —  
O'er him thus fallen in his pride,  
Ere mist of age, or blight or blast,  
Had o'er his mighty spirit passed.

They made the warrior's grave beneath  
The bending of the wild elm's wreath,  
When the dark hunter's piercing eye  
Had found that mountain rest on high,  
Where, scattered by the sharp wind's breath,  
Beneath the rugged cliff were thrown  
The strong belt and the mouldering bone.

Where was the warrior's foot, when first  
The red sun on the mountain burst?  
Where, when the sultry noon-time came  
On the green vales with scorching flame,  
And made the woodlands faint with thirst?  
'Twas where the wind is keen and loud,  
And the gray eagle breasts the cloud.

Where was the warrior's foot, when night  
 Veiled in thick cloud the mountain-height?  
 None heard the loud and sudden crash,  
 None saw the fallen warrior dash  
 Down the bare rock so high and white!  
 But he that drooped not in the chase  
 Made on the hills his burial-place.

They found him there, when the long day  
 Of cold desertion passed away;  
 And traces on that barren cleft  
 Of struggling hard with death were left, —  
     Deep marks and footprints in the clay.  
 And they have laid this feathery helm  
 By the dark river and green elm.

The number for Aug. 15, 1825, contained the following poem: —

#### THE SEA-DIVER.

My way is on the bright blue sea,  
     My sleep upon its rocking tide;  
 And many an eye has followed me  
     Where billows clasp the worn seaside.

My plumage bears the crimson blush,  
     When ocean by the sea is kissed.  
 When fades the evening's purple flush,  
     My dark wing cleaves the silver mist.

Full many a fathom down beneath  
     The bright arch of the splendid deep,  
 My ear has heard the sea-shell breathe  
     O'er living myriads in their sleep.

They rested by the coral throne,  
     And by the pearly diadem;  
 Where the pale sea-grape had o'ergrown  
     The glorious dwellings made for them.

At night, upon my storm-drenched wing,  
I poised above a helmless bark;  
And soon I saw the shattered thing  
Had passed away, and left no mark.

And, when the wind and storm were done,  
A ship, that had rode out the gale,  
Sunk down — without a signal-gun;  
And none was left to tell the tale.

I saw the pomp of day depart,  
The cloud resign its golden crown,  
When to the ocean's beating heart  
The sailor's wasted corse went down.

Peace be to those whose graves are made  
Beneath the bright and silver sea!  
Peace — that their relics there were laid  
With no vain pride and pageantry.

In the issue of Oct. 1, 1825, appeared the poem on "Autumn." Mr. Longfellow chose to retain it in the collected edition of his poems, and it is therefore omitted here.

The issue of Nov. 15, 1825, contained the following: —

#### MUSINGS.

I SAT by my window one night,  
And watched how the stars grew high;  
And the earth and skies were a splendid sight  
To a sober and musing eye.

From heaven the silver moon shone down  
With gentle and mellow ray,  
And beneath the crowded roofs of the town  
In broad light and shadow lay.

A glory was on the silent sea,  
And mainland and island too,  
Till a haze came over the lowland lea,  
And shrouded that beautiful blue.

Bright in the moon the autumn wood  
Its crimson scarf unrolled;  
And the trees, like a splendid army, stood  
In a panoply of gold.

I saw them waving their banners high,  
As their crests to the night-wind bowed;  
And a distant sound on the air went by,  
Like the whispering of a crowd.

Then I watched from my window how fast  
The lights all around me fled,  
As the wearied man to his slumber passed,  
And the sick one to his bed.

All faded save one, that burned  
With distant and steady light;  
But that, too, went out — and I turned  
Where my own lamp within shone bright.

Thus, thought I, our joys must die,  
Yes, — the brightest from earth we win;  
Till each turns away, with a sigh,  
To the lamp that burns brightly within.

In the issue of April 1, 1826, appeared the following beautiful poem : —

SONG.

WHERE, from the eye of day,  
The dark and silent river  
Pursues through tangled woods a way  
O'er which the tall trees quiver;



The silver mist, that breaks  
From out that woodland cover,  
Betrays the hidden path it takes,  
And hangs the current over.

So oft the thoughts that burst  
From hidden springs of feeling,  
Like silent streams, unseen at first,  
From our cold hearts are stealing;

But soon the clouds that veil  
The eye of Love, when glowing,  
Betray the long unwhispered tale  
Of thoughts in darkness flowing!

Here the contributions dropped, nor did the magazine itself long survive. The most singular part of the affair is, that Longfellow, when issuing his first collected volume of poems, thirteen years later, the "Voices of the Night," thought it worth while to recall only five (and not all of them the best) of these early poems from their *oubliette*.

The pieces that were reprinted received a few unimportant verbal alterations, but the changes were altogether insignificant. In a short preface to this section of earlier pieces, Mr. Longfellow says, that "these poems were written, for the most part, during my college life, and all of them before the age of nineteen. Some have found their way into schools, and seem to be successful: others lead a vagabond and precarious existence in the corners of newspapers, or have changed their names, and run away to seek their fortunes beyond the sea. I say, with the Bishop of Avranches on a similar occa-

sion, 'I cannot be displeased to see these children of mine, which I have neglected, and almost exposed, brought from their wanderings in lanes and alleys, and safely lodged, in order to go forth into the world together in a more decorous garb.' "

7 It is now considerably more than half a century since the latest of these early poems saw the light, and the name of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow is now known and honored wherever the English language is spoken. We possess, to-day, the mature fruits of his genius; but it will be pleasant and profitable to all lovers and students of poetry, to have an opportunity of recalling the first flights of song of one who has since become so famous throughout the world.

Mr. George B. Cheever, writing in 1831, says, "Most of Mr. Longfellow's poetry, indeed, we believe nearly all that has been published, appeared, during his college life, in 'The United-States Literary Gazette.' It displays a very refined taste, and a very pure vein of poetical feeling. It possesses what has been a rare quality in the American poets, — simplicity of expression, without any attempt to startle the reader, or to produce an effect by far-sought epithets. There is much sweetness in his imagery and language, and sometimes he is hardly excelled by any one for the quiet accuracy exhibited in his pictures of natural objects. His poetry will not easily be forgotten." <sup>1</sup>

To such praise, little need be added; nor is it necessary to enter into any detailed criticism of

<sup>1</sup> The American Common-place Book of Poetry, with Occasional Notes, by George B. Cheever, Boston, 1831.

these slight first-fruits of Longfellow's muse. If the savor of them is sweet, there can be no harm in culling them from the tangled wilderness where they lay unheeded, and in danger of perishing.

In order to appreciate aright Mr. Longfellow's literary service to this country, it will be necessary to go back, in imagination, to the epoch when he began his literary career. The year 1825 is a good year on which to fix the mind, inasmuch as it marks the close of the first quarter of the present century. At that time American literature was not born. The very appetite for it had to be evoked; the very means of giving it to the public, to be created. All of the publishing-houses of that day—and there was really no great publishing-house in existence in America—were contenting themselves with simply reprinting the works of English authors, and were paying nothing for the privilege. A very few literary periodicals were barely subsisting on a miserly patronage, and were, as a rule, ill-deserving of that. No human mind had as yet conceived the idea of a magazine on the broad and well-directed basis of to-day. The religious press of the period was totally unlike that of the present era; and the platform of all was narrow, intolerant, and bitterly controversial. Charles Dickens's caricatures in "Martin Chuzzlewit," published in 1843, would not have been so hateful if they had not been so true. In general terms, there was then no American literature, barely a companionship in letters.

But it must not be assumed, in this survey of the field, that there was then no literary man or wo-

man in the country; for quite a number of persons had already essayed something of a literary character, though under adverse conditions, and to a small audience. William Cullen Bryant had published his poem of "Thanatopsis" in 1816, the "Ages" in 1821, and, having abandoned the law for literature, had gone to New York, and, in 1825, founded "The New-York Review and Athenæum Magazine," in which was to appear some of his best poems. In the following year he became editor of "The Evening Post," a position which he held until the close of his life. Washington Irving was about the only writer who had succeeded in achieving any thing of a reputation, either at home or abroad. He had already published "Salmagundi," "Knickerbocker's History of New York," the "Sketch-Book," "Bracebridge Hall," and the "Tales of a Traveller." Of this genial author, a London reviewer then wrote, "We may congratulate him on the rank which he has already gained, of which the momentary caprice of the public cannot long deprive him; and with hearty good-will, playfully, but we hope not profanely, we exclaim as we part with him, 'Very pleasant hast thou been to me, my brother Jonathan!'" Edgar A. Poe, at this time, was chiefly celebrated for his feats of reckless hardihood. If he had as yet written any verses, no publisher had brought them out. Motley was still a youth, and attending school at Dorchester, Mass.; and Prescott had not yet appeared before the public as an historian.

Whittier was still on his father's farm near Haverhill, Mass., anon writing occasional verses for the

local newspaper, and turning his hand to a little shoemaking. Emerson, having studied divinity, had assumed the charge of a congregation in Boston; but not yet had he come forth as an author. Holmes was just on the point of entering Harvard College; and, as we have already observed, Hawthorne had written nothing beyond a few college exercises. Cooper was feeling his way, and had yet in the crible his unformed stories of Indian and pioneer life. It will thus be seen that American life was strangely prosaic; and, before it could feel the glow of its own poetry, it must know something of the poetry of the past. This was Longfellow's first service to his countrymen. "He was a mediator between the old and the new: he translated the romance of the past into the language of universal life. Out of the closed volume he gathered the flowers that lay pressed and dead and odorless: he breathed into them the breath of life, and they bloomed and were fragrant again. He came to the past as the south winds come to the woods in spring; and the trees put out their leaves, and the earth its mosses, and the dell its wild-flowers, to greet him." As we follow down the poet's years, from this early period of scholarly venture to the matured present, we shall find that his ambition was always directed towards the fulfilment of a laudable purpose, and that this purpose was largely the revivification of a buried past. For it he made patient preparation in most careful and painstaking study.

Notwithstanding that Longfellow had published several poems, and these had been widely reprinted,



still, at the time of which I write, he himself was not known as an author beyond the circle of his own family and most intimate friends. That his verses were admired, is evidenced by the fact that the editor of "The Gazette" never refused one of his contributions, which were invariably sent to him anonymously, or rather bore only the signature "H. W. L." When Mr. Carter, who succeeded Mr. Parsons in the editorial chair, met Professor Packard subsequently in Boston, he made inquiry what young man, signing himself "H. W. L.," was sending him such fine poetry from Bowdoin College. The professor was able only to conjecture the name of the poet.

In 1826, the year after Longfellow left college, a modest volume of "Miscellaneous Poems selected from the United-States Literary Gazette" appeared; and it furnished by far the best summary of the national poetry up to that time. Its authors were Bryant, Longfellow, Percival, Dawes, Mellen, and Jones; and it certainly offered a curious contrast to that equally characteristic volume of 1794, "The Columbian Muse," whose poets were Barlow, Trumbull, Freneau, Dwight, Humphreys, and a few others; not a single poem or poet being held in common by the two collections.



## CHAPTER V.

## LONGFELLOW'S FIRST VISIT TO EUROPE.

(1826-1829.)

AFTER his graduation, as the second in a class of thirty-one members, Longfellow began the study of law in his father's office in Portland, with a view of entering upon its practice. But as might have been expected of one whose tastes were already formed, and who had made such a growing success in the field of literature, the young man soon wearied of legal study. In the unattractive pages of Coke and Blackstone, he was unable to find any thing congenial to his mind; and almost in despair, and very much to the dissatisfaction of his father, he confessed that he cherished no love for the subject, and wished to be excused from its further study. While he was still undecided to what next to turn his attention,—the thought of becoming a literary man never once entered his head at this time,—the call was extended to him to become professor of modern languages and literature at his *Alma Mater*. This was indeed a surprise; for scarcely six months had elapsed since his return from Brunswick, and Longfellow was now but a youth of nineteen.

There is a tradition in the college, relative to this

appointment, which I must not fail to mention just here. While yet a college student, Longfellow had written a metrical translation of one of Horace's odes. The reading of this translation, or a part of it, at a general examination, had attracted the attention of the examiners by its rare beauty of expression; and, when the proposal was made in the board of trustees to establish a chair of modern languages and literature, the Hon. Benjamin Orr, a distinguished lawyer of Maine, and a great lover of Horace, nominated Mr. Longfellow, and referred to this translation as sufficient proof of his fitness for the position. The Horace itself, with the autographs of Longfellow, Calvin Stowe, and John A. Andrew, is in the collection of Professor Egbert C. Smyth of Andover, Mass.<sup>1</sup>

An invitation to a professorship meant something in those days; and, in the present instance, it meant every thing. A new chair had been created; and Longfellow, with neither years nor experience to back him, was now selected to fill it. He was asked, not to carry on a department already established, but to organize one himself, at a time, be it remembered, when American colleges had not yet learned that France and Germany have a literature as well as Greece and Rome. Should he accept the invitation? this was now the only question with him. It was well considered in his own mind, and warmly debated around the home fireside. He was not expected to set to work immediately, but was given permission to prepare himself for the new position;

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Lyman Abbott is my authority for this anecdote.

and preparation presupposed a trip to Europe. But the time came when it became necessary to return an answer to the board of trustees: it was an affirmative response.

In the spring of 1826, all preparations having been duly completed, Longfellow bade adieu to his friends in Portland, and went to New York. Several days were consumed in exploring some of the wonders of the great metropolis, and in making excursions to the surrounding places of interest. Having engaged his passage to Europe on a sailing-vessel, which had not yet gotten ready for departure, and having a few days of leisure still on his hands, it occurred to him that he would make a visit to Philadelphia. It was on a beautiful spring day when he started, and the country was as lovely then as it is now. I quote his own account of this interesting ramble:—

“I spent a week in the Quaker City, stopping at the old Mansion House on Third Street, near Walnut. It was one of the best hotels I ever stopped at, and at that time perhaps the best in the country. It has been the private residence of the wealthy Brighams, and was kept by a man named Head. The table was excellent; and the bed-chambers were splendidly furnished, and were great, large, airy rooms. It has given way now to the demands of business, I believe; for, when I was last there, I could hardly recognize the place where I stood. During this visit, I spent much time looking about; and Philadelphia is one of the places which made a lasting impression upon me, and left its mark upon

my later work. Even the streets of Philadelphia make rhyme, —

“ ‘Chestnut, walnut, spruce, and pine,  
Market, arch, race, and vine.’ ”

“I got the climax of ‘Evangeline’ from Philadelphia, and it was singular how I happened to do so. I was passing down Spruce Street one day towards my hotel, after a walk, when my attention was attracted to a large building with beautiful trees about it, inside of a high enclosure. I walked along until I came to the great gate, and then stepped inside, and looked carefully over the place. The charming picture of lawn, flower-beds, and shade which it presented, made an impression which has never left me; and twenty-four years after, when I came to write ‘Evangeline,’ I located the final scene — the meeting between Evangeline and Gabriel, and the death — at this poorhouse, and the burial in an old Catholic graveyard not far away, which I found, by chance, in another of my walks.”

Having filled his mind with pleasant reminiscences of the old Quaker City, Longfellow returned to New York, whence he was now about to leave for a prolonged sojourn in the lands beyond the sea. What were the thoughts and feelings of this young man, alone in a great city, and soon to tempt the dangers and uncertainties of an ocean-voyage, can only be conjectured. He cherished, at this time, an irresistible longing to catch a glimpse of the Old World; but his purpose in going thither was not like that of an ordinary tourist, who feels himself in need of a

change of scene, and of a relaxation from his cares of business, but was that of the scholar, who, having a fixed project in view, now seeks to take the first step towards its accomplishment. Longfellow was about to enter upon a course of philological study; and he was to pursue this course, not out of text-books, — which did not then exist, and which, though they exist now, are but poor auxiliaries to an earnest student, — but by seeing European society in all its forms, by conversing with men of all characters, and representatives of all professions, by investigating institutions and laws, and by acquainting himself with courts and parliaments. He craved the faculty of reading and speaking foreign languages, and sought the opportunity of learning them, not merely from the drill of professional teachers, but as well from the lips of those whose words, written or spoken, had taught them.

Ocean-travel, a half-century ago, differed much from what it is at the present day. The great steamship-lines were, as yet, unthought of; and the journey to Europe occupied nearly thrice the amount of time that it does now. Such a luxury as a cheap excursion, which has become so distinguished a feature of modern travel, was then counted among the impossibilities. Indeed, no one ever thought of going to Europe in those days, unless he had a definite object in view; or except he was a merchant having foreign connections in his business; or a scholar bound for a German university to complete his studies before entering on a professorship; or a son of wealthy parents, who was now about to begin



a life of elegant leisure. No passenger steamer had yet crossed the thousand leagues of watery waste that divide the two continents; and whoever made the journey must needs have sailed on board some packet-ship, and be many days at sea. But this was no discomfiture to an earnest student like Longfellow. He had no fear of the ocean: from his earliest years he had been charmed by its grandeur and its majesty.

In May, 1826, the ship sailed from New York with eleven passengers aboard, of which Longfellow was one, and the youngest. It was a packet-ship, bound for Havre, France. She was towed down the harbor a short distance, and then a favoring breeze wafted her gayly along her course. The wind continued to be fair and strong; and the voyage was pleasant, void of episodes, and as rapid as such a voyage could have been at this period. By the 1st of June, Havre was reached; and there, for the first time in his life, Longfellow found himself face to face with antiquity. Having been dismissed from the custom-house, and spent a few days in port, Longfellow now prepared to begin his first series of wanderings on the Continent. His route lay through the beautiful province of Normandy; and the road leading from Havre to Rouen, his next objective point, was through a level, champaign country. His own words furnish the best description of what he saw and experienced.

“Every thing,” he says, “wore an air of freshness and novelty, which pleased my eye, and kept my fancy constantly busy. Life was like a dream. It



was a luxury to breathe again the free air, after having been so long cooped up at sea; and, like a long-imprisoned bird let loose from its cage, my imagination revelled in the freshness and sunshine of the morning landscape.

"On every side, valley and hill were covered with a carpet of soft velvet green. The birds were singing merrily in the trees; and the landscape wore that look of gayety so well described in the quaint language of an old romance, making the 'sad, pensive, and aching heart to rejoice, and to throw off mourning and sadness.' Here and there a cluster of chestnut-trees shaded a thatched-roofed cottage; and little patches of vineyard were scattered on the slope of the hills, mingling their delicate green with the deep hues of the early summer-grain. The whole landscape had a fresh, breezy look. It was not hedged in from the highways, but lay open to the eye of the traveller, and seemed to welcome him with open arms. I felt less a stranger in the land; and as my eye traced the dusty road winding along through a rich, cultivated country, and skirted on either side with blossomed fruit-trees, and occasionally caught glimpses of a little farmhouse resting in a green hollow, and lapped in the bosom of plenty, I felt that I was in a prosperous, hospitable, and happy land.

"I had taken my seat on top of the diligence, in order to have a better view of the country. It was one of those ponderous vehicles which totter slowly along the paved roads of France, laboring beneath a mountain of trunks and bales of all descriptions, and, like the Trojan horse, bore a groaning multi-

tude within it. It was a curious and cumbersome machine, resembling the bodies of three coaches placed upon one carriage, with a cabriolet on top for outside passengers. On the panels of each door were painted the *fleurs-de-lis* of France; and upon the side of the coach emblazoned, in golden characters, '*Exploitation Générale des Messageries Royales des Diligences pour le Havre, Rouen, et Paris.*'

"It would be useless to describe the motley groups that filled the four quarters of this little world. There was the dusty tradesman, with green coat and cotton umbrella; the sallow invalid, in skull-cap and cloth shoes; the priest in his cassock; the peasant in his frock; and a whole family of squalling children. My fellow-travellers on top were a gay subaltern, with fierce mustache, and a nut-brown village beauty of sweet sixteen. The subaltern wore a military undress, and a little blue cloth cap in the shape of a cow-bell, trimmed smartly with silver lace, and cocked on one side of his head. The brunette was decked out with a staid white Norman cap, nicely starched and plaited, and nearly three feet high, a rosary and cross about her neck, a linsey-woolsey gown, and wooden shoes.

"The personage who seemed to rule this little world with absolute sway was a short, pursy man, with a busy, self-satisfied air, and the sonorous title of *Monsieur le Conducteur*. As insignia of office, he wore a little round fur cap and fur-trimmed jacket, and carried in his hand a small leathern portfolio, containing his way-bill. He sat with us on top of the diligence, and with comic gravity issued his man-

dates to the postilion below, like some petty monarch speaking from his throne. In every dingy village we thundered through, he had a thousand commissions to execute and to receive; a package to throw out on this side, and another to take in on that; a whisper for the landlady at the inn; a love-letter and a kiss for her daughter; and a wink or a snap of his fingers for the chambermaid at the window. Then, there were so many questions to be asked and answered while changing horses! Everybody had a word to say. It was '*Monsieur le Conducteur!*' here, '*Monsieur le Conducteur!*' there. He was in complete bustle; till at length crying, '*En route!*' he ascended the dizzy height, and we lumbered away in a cloud of dust.

"But what most attracted my attention was the grotesque appearance of the postilion and the horses. He was a comical-looking little fellow, already past the heyday of life, with a thin, sharp countenance, to which the smoke of tobacco and the fumes of wine had given the dusty look of parchment. He was equipped in a short jacket of purple velvet, set off with a red collar, and adorned with silken cord. Tight breeches of bright yellow leather arrayed his pipe-stem legs, which were swallowed up in a huge pair of wooden boots, iron-fastened, and armed with long, rattling spurs. His shirt-collar was of vast dimensions; and between it and the broad brim of his high, bell-crowned, varnished hat, projected an eel-skin cue, with a little tuft of frizzled hair, like a powder-puff, at the end, bobbing up and down with the motion of the rider, and scattering a white cloud around him.

“The horses which drew the diligence were harnessed to it with ropes and leather thongs in the most uncouth manner imaginable. They were five in number, black, white, and gray,—as various in size as in color. Their tails were braided, and tied up with wisps of straw; and when the postilion mounted, and cracked his heavy whip, off they started, one pulling this way, another that,—one on the gallop, another trotting, and the rest dragging along at a scrambling pace between a trot and a walk. No sooner did the vehicle get comfortably in motion, than the postilion, throwing the reins upon his horse’s neck, and drawing a flint and steel from one pocket, and a short-stemmed pipe from another, leisurely struck fire, and began to smoke. Ever and anon some part of the rope-harness would give way. *Monsieur le Conducteur* from on high would thunder forth an oath or two; a head would be popped out at every window; half a dozen voices exclaim at once, ‘What’s the matter?’ and the postilion, apostrophizing the *Diable* as usual, would thrust his long whip into the leg of his boot, leisurely dismount, and, drawing a handful of packthread from his pocket, quietly set himself to mend matters in the best way possible.

“In this manner we toiled slowly along the dusty highway. Occasionally the scene was enlivened by a group of peasants, driving before them a little ass laden with vegetables for a neighboring market. Then we would pass a solitary shepherd sitting by the roadside, with a shaggy dog at his feet, guarding his flock, and making his scanty meal on the contents

of his wallet; or perchance a little peasant-girl in wooden shoes, leading a cow by a cord attached to her horns, to browse along the side of the ditch. Then we would all alight to ascend some formidable hill on foot, and be escorted up by a clamorous group of sturdy mendicants, annoyed by the ceaseless importunity of worthless beggary, or moved to pity by the palsied limbs of the aged, and the sightless eye-balls of the blind.

“Occasionally, too, the postilion drew up in front of a dingy little cabaret, completely overshadowed by wide-spreading trees. A lusty grape-vine clambered up beside the door; and a pine-bough was thrust out from a hole in the wall, by way of tavern-bush. Upon the front of the house was generally inscribed in large black letters, ‘ICI ON DONNE À BOIRE ET À MANGER; ON LOGE À PIED ET À CHEVAL,’ — a sign which may be thus paraphrased, ‘Good entertainment for man and beast,’ but which was once translated by a foreigner, ‘Here they give to eat and drink: they lodge on foot and on horseback!’

“Thus one object of curiosity succeeded another; hill, valley, stream, and woodland flitted by me like the shifting scenes of a magic-lantern; and one train of thought gave place to another, — till at length, in the after part of the day, we entered the broad and shady avenue of fine old trees which leads to the western gate of Rouen, and a few moments afterward were lost in the crowds and confusion of its narrow streets.”

On arriving at Rouen, next to Paris the most interesting city of France, where nothing but the liv-



ing countenances and the merchandise displayed in the shop-windows remind one of modern times, Longfellow was led to seek lodgings at the Lion d'Or, — the Golden Lion Inn. He says, —

“The hostess of the Golden Lion received me with a courtesy and a smile, rang the house-bell for a servant, and told him to take the gentleman's things to No. 35. I followed him up stairs. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven! Seven stories high, by Our Lady! I counted them every one: and, when I went down to remonstrate, I counted them again; so that there was no possibility of a mistake. When I asked for a lower room, the hostess told me the house was full; and, when I spoke of going to another hotel, she said she should be so very sorry, so *désolée*, to have monsieur leave her, that I marched up again to No. 35.

“After finding all the fault I could with the chamber, I ended, as is generally the case with most men on such occasions, by being very well pleased with it. The only thing I could possibly complain of was my being lodged in the seventh story, and in the immediate neighborhood of a gentleman who was learning to play the French horn. But, to remunerate me for these disadvantages, my window looked down into a market-place, and gave me a distant view of the towers of the cathedral, and the ruins of the church and abbey of St. Ouen.

“When I had fully prepared myself for a ramble through the city, it was already sunset; and, after the heat and dust of the day, the freshness of the long evening twilight was delightful. When I enter



a new city I cannot rest till I have satisfied the first cravings of curiosity by rambling through its streets. Nor can I endure a cicerone with his eternal 'This way, sir.' I never desire to be led directly to an object worthy of a traveller's notice, but prefer a thousand times to find my own way, and come upon it by surprise. This was particularly the case at Rouen. It was the first European city of importance that I visited. There was an air of antiquity about the whole city that breathed of the Middle Ages; and so strong and delightful was the impression that it made upon my youthful imagination, that nothing which I afterward saw could either equal or efface it. I have since passed through that city, but I did not stop. I was unwilling to destroy an impression which, even at this distant day, is as fresh upon my mind as if it were of yesterday.

"With these delightful feelings I rambled on from street to street; till at length, after threading a narrow alley, I unexpectedly came out in front of the magnificent cathedral. If it had suddenly risen from the earth, the effect could not have been more powerful and instantaneous. It completely overwhelmed my imagination; and I stood for a long time motionless, gazing entranced upon the stupendous edifice. I had before seen no specimen of Gothic architecture; and the massive towers before me, the lofty windows of stained glass, the low portal, with its receding arches and rude statues, all produced upon my untravelled mind an impression of awful sublimity. When I entered the church, the impression was still more deep and solemn. It was

the hour of vespers. The religious twilight of the place, the lamps that burned on the distant altar, the kneeling crowd, the tinkling bell, and the chant of the evening service that rolled along the vaulted roof in broken and repeated echoes, filled me with new and intense emotions. When I gazed on the stupendous architecture of the church; the huge columns that the eye followed up till they were lost in the gathering dusk of the arches above; the long and shadowy aisles; the statues of saints and martyrs that stood in every recess; the figures of armed knights upon the tombs; the uncertain light that stole through the painted windows of each little chapel; and the form of the cowed and solitary monk, kneeling at the shrine of his favorite saint, or passing between the lofty columns of the church, — all I had read of, but had not seen, — I was transported back to the Dark Ages, and felt as I can never feel again.

“On the following day I visited the remains of an old palace built by Edward the Third, now occupied as the Palais de Justice, and the ruins of the church and monastery of St. Antoine. I saw the hole in the tower where the ponderous bell of the abbey fell through, and took a peep at the curious illuminated manuscript of Daniel d'Aubonne in the public library. The remainder of the morning was spent in visiting the ruins of the ancient abbey of St. Ouen, which is now transformed into the Hotel de Ville, and in strolling through its beautiful gardens, dreaming of the present and the past, and given up to ‘a melancholy of my own.’

“At the *table d'hôte* of the Golden Lion I fell into conversation with an elderly gentleman, who proved to be a great antiquarian, and thoroughly read in all the forgotten lore of the city. As our tastes were somewhat similar, we were soon upon very friendly terms; and after dinner we strolled out to visit some remarkable localities, and took the *gloria* together at the Chevalier Bayard.

“When we returned to the Golden Lion, he entertained me with many curious stories of the spots we had been visiting.”

Longfellow passed the midsummer months at the village of Auteuil, which he thought “the pleasantest of the many little villages that lie in the immediate vicinity of the metropolis.” He thus recounts his impressions of the place:—

“It is situated on the outskirts of the Bois de Boulogne, a wood of some extent, in whose green alleys the dusty cit enjoys the luxury of an evening drive, and gentlemen meet in the morning to give each other satisfaction in the usual way. A cross-road, skirted with green hedge-rows, and overshadowed by tall poplars, leads you from the noisy highway of St. Cloud and Versailles to the still retirement of this suburban hamlet. On either side the eye discovers old châteaux amid the trees, and green parks, whose pleasant shades recall a thousand images of La Fontaine, Racine, and Molière; and on an eminence overlooking the windings of the Seine, and giving a beautiful though distant view of the domes and gardens of Paris, rises the village of Passy, long the residence of our countrymen Franklin and Count Rumford.

“I took up my abode at a *maison de santé*; not that I was a valetudinarian, but because I there found some one to whom I could whisper, ‘How sweet is solitude!’ Behind the house was a garden filled with fruit-trees of various kinds, and adorned with gravel-walks, and green arbors furnished with tables, and rustic seats for the repose of the invalid and the sleep of the indolent. Here the inmates of the rural hospital met on common ground, to breathe the invigorating air of morning, and while away the lazy noon or vacant evening with tales of the sick-chamber.

“The establishment was kept by Dr. Dentdelion, a dried-up little fellow, with red hair, a sandy complexion, and the physiognomy and gestures of a monkey. His character corresponded to his outward lineaments, for he had all a monkey’s busy and curious impertinence. Nevertheless, such as he was, the village Æsculapius strutted forth the little great man of Auteuil. The peasants looked up to him as to an oracle: he contrived to be at the head of every thing, and laid claim to the credit of all public improvements in the village. In fine, he was a great man on a small scale.

“It was within the dingy walls of this little potentate’s imperial palace that I chose my country residence. I had a chamber in the second story, with a solitary window which looked upon the street, and gave me a peep into a neighbor’s garden. This I esteemed a great privilege; for, as a stranger, I desired to see all that was passing out-of-doors: and the sight of green trees, though growing on anoth-

er's ground, is always a blessing. Within doors, — had I been disposed to quarrel with my household gods, — I might have taken some objection to my neighborhood; for on one side of me was a consumptive patient, whose graveyard-cough drove me from my chamber by day; and on the other an English colonel, whose incoherent ravings, in the delirium of a high and obstinate fever, often broke my slumbers by night. But I found ample amends for these inconveniences in the society of those who were so little indisposed as hardly to know what ailed them, and those who, in health themselves, had accompanied a friend or relative to the shades of the country in pursuit of it.

“It was, however, to the Bois de Boulogne that I looked for my principal recreation. There I took my solitary walk morning and evening, or, mounted on a little mouse-colored donkey, paced demurely along the woodland pathway. I had a favorite seat beneath the shadow of a venerable oak, one of the few hoary patriarchs of the wood which had survived the bivouacs of the allied armies. It stood upon the brink of a little glassy pool, whose tranquil bosom was the image of a quiet and secluded life, and stretched its parental arms over a rustic bench that had been constructed beneath it for the accommodation of the foot-traveller, or, perchance, some idle dreamer like myself. It seemed to look round with a lordly air upon its old hereditary domain, whose stillness was no longer broken by the tap of the martial drum, nor the discordant clang of arms; and, as the breeze whispered among its branches, it seemed



to be holding friendly colloquies with a few of its venerable contemporaries, who stooped from the opposite bank of the pool, nodding gravely now and then, and gazing at themselves, with a sigh, in the mirror below.

“In this quiet haunt of rural repose, I used to sit at noon, hear the birds sing, and ‘possess myself in much quietness.’ Just at my feet lay the little silver pool, with the sky and the woods painted in its mimic vault, and occasionally the image of a bird, or the soft, watery outline of a cloud, floating silently through its sunny hollows. The water-lily spread its broad, green leaves on the surface, and rocked to sleep a little world of insect life in its golden cradle. Sometimes a wandering leaf came floating and wavering downward, and settled on the water; then a vagabond insect would break the smooth surface into a thousand ripples, or a green-coated frog slide from the bank, and, plump! dive headlong to the bottom.

“I entered, too, with some enthusiasm, into all the rural sports and merrymakes of the village. The holidays were so many little eras of mirth and good feeling; for the French have that happy and sunshiny temperament — that merry-go-mad character — which renders all their social meetings scenes of enjoyment and hilarity. I made it a point never to miss any of the *fêtes-champêtres*, or rural dances, at the wood of Boulogne; though I confess it sometimes gave me a momentary uneasiness to see my rustic throne beneath the oak usurped by a noisy group of girls, the silence and decorum of my imaginary realm



broken by music and laughter, and, in a word, my whole kingdom turned topsy-turvy with romping, fiddling, and dancing. But I am naturally, and from principle too, a lover of all those innocent amusements which cheer the laborer's toil, and, as it were, put their shoulders to the wheel of life, and help the poor man along with his load of cares. Hence I saw, with no small delight, the rustic swain astride the wooden horse of the *carrousel*, and the village maiden whirling round and round in its dizzy car; or took my stand on a rising ground that overlooked the dance, an idle spectator in a busy throng. It was just where the village touched the outward border of the wood. There a little area had been levelled beneath the trees, surrounded by a painted rail, with a row of benches inside. The music was placed in a slight balcony, built around the trunk of a large tree in the centre; and the lamps, hanging from the branches above, gave a gay, fantastic, and fairy look to the scene. How often in such moments did I recall the lines of Goldsmith, describing those 'kinder skies' beneath which 'France displays her bright domain,' and feel how true and masterly the sketch, —

“‘Alike all ages : dames of ancient days  
Have led their children through the mirthful maze;  
And the gray grandsire, skilled in gestic lore,  
Has frisked beneath the burden of threescore.’

“Nor must I forget to mention the *fête patronale*, a kind of annual fair, which is held at midsummer, in honor of the patron saint of Auteuil. Then the

principal street of the village is filled with booths of every description; strolling players, and rope-dancers and jugglers, and giants and dwarfs, and wild beasts, and all kinds of wonderful shows, excite the gaping curiosity of the throng; and in dust, crowds, and confusion the village rivals the capital itself. Then the goodly dames of Passy descend into the village of Auteuil; then the brewers of Billancourt and the tanners of Sèvres dance lustily under the green-wood tree; and then, too, the sturdy fishmongers of Brétigny and Saint-Yon regale their wives with an airing in a swing, and their customers with eels and crawfish; or, as is more poetically set forth in an old Christmas carol, —

“‘ Vous eussiez vu venir  
Tous ceux de Saint-Yon,  
Et ceux de Brétigny,  
Apportant du poisson.  
Les barbeaux et gardons,  
Anguilles et carpettes,  
Etaient à bon marché,  
Croyez,  
À cette journée-là,  
Là, là,  
Et aussi les perchettes.’

“I found another source of amusement in observing the various personages that daily passed and repassed beneath my window. The character which most of all arrested my attention was a poor, blind fiddler, whom I first saw chanting a doleful ballad at the door of a small tavern, near the gate of the village. He wore a brown coat, out at elbows, the

fragment of a velvet waistcoat, and a pair of tight nankeen trousers, so short as hardly to reach below his calves. A little foraging-cap, that had long since seen its best days, set off an open, good-humored countenance, bronzed by sun and wind. He was led about by a brisk, middle-aged woman, in straw hat and wooden shoes; and a little barefooted boy, with clear blue eyes and flaxen hair, held a tattered hat in his hand, in which he collected eleemosynary sous. The old fellow had a favorite song, which he used to sing with great glee to a merry, joyous air, the burden of which ran, "*Chantons l'amour et le plaisir!*" I often thought it would have been a good lesson for the crabbed and discontented rich man to have heard this remnant of humanity, poor, blind, and in rags, and dependent upon casual charity for his daily bread, singing, in so cheerful a voice, the charms of existence, and, as it were, fiddling life away to a merry tune.

"I was, one morning, called to my window by the sound of rustic music. I looked out, and beheld a procession of villagers advancing along the road, attired in gay dresses, and marching merrily on in the direction of the church. I soon perceived that it was a marriage festival. The procession was led by a long orang-outang of a man, in a straw hat and white dimity bob-coat, playing on an asthmatic clarinet, from which he contrived to blow unearthly sounds, ever and anon squeaking off at right angles from his tune, and winding up with a grand flourish on the guttural notes. Behind him, led by his little boy, came the blind fiddler, his honest features glow-

ing with all the hilarity of a rustic bridal, and, as he stumbled along, sawing away upon his fiddle till he made all crack again. Then came the happy bridegroom, dressed in his Sunday suit of blue, with a large nosegay in his button-hole; and close beside him his blushing bride, with downcast eyes, clad in a white robe and slippers, and wearing a wreath of white roses in her hair. The friends and relatives brought up the procession; and a troop of village urchins came shouting along in the rear, scrambling among themselves for the largess of sous and sugar-plums that now and then issued in large handfuls from the pockets of a lean man in black, who seemed to officiate as master of ceremonies on the occasion. I gazed on the procession till it was out of sight; and, when the last wheeze of the clarinet died upon my ear, I could not help thinking how happy were they who were thus to dwell together in the peaceful bosom of their native village, far from the gilded misery and the pestilential vices of the town.

“On the evening of the same day, I was sitting by the window, enjoying the freshness of the air and the beauty and stillness of the hour, when I heard the distant and solemn hymn of the Catholic burial-service, at first so faint and indistinct that it seemed an illusion. It rose mournfully on the hush of evening, died gradually away, then ceased. Then it rose again, nearer and more distinct; and soon after a funeral procession appeared, and passed directly beneath my window. It was led by a priest, bearing the banner of the church, and followed by two boys, holding long flambeaux in their hands. Next came

a double file of priests in their surplices, with a missal in one hand and a lighted wax taper in the other, chanting the funeral dirge at intervals, now pausing, and then again taking up the mournful burden of their lamentation, accompanied by others, who played upon a rude kind of bassoon, with a dismal and wailing sound. Then followed various symbols of the church, and the bier borne on the shoulders of four men. The coffin was covered with a velvet pall; and a chaplet of white flowers lay upon it, indicating that the deceased was unmarried. A few of the villagers came behind, clad in mourning-robes, and bearing lighted tapers. The procession passed slowly along the same street that, in the morning, had been thronged by the gay bridal company. A melancholy train of thought forced itself home upon my mind. The joys and sorrows of this world are so strikingly mingled. Our mirth and grief are brought so mournfully in contact. We laugh while others weep, and others rejoice when we are sad. The light heart and the heavy walk side by side, and go about together. Beneath the same roof are spread the wedding-feast and the funeral-pall. The bridal-song mingles with the burial-hymn. One goes to the marriage-bed, another to the grave; and all is mutable, uncertain, and transitory.

“It is with sensations of pure delight that I recur to the brief period of my existence which was passed in the peaceful shades of Auteuil. There is one kind of wisdom which we learn from the world, and another kind which can be acquired in solitude only. In cities we study those around us, but in the re-



tirement of the country we learn to know ourselves. The voice within us is more distinctly audible in the stillness of the place; and the gentler affections of our nature spring up more freshly in its tranquillity and sunshine, nurtured by the healthy principle which we inhale with the pure air, and invigorated by the genial influences which descend into the heart from the quiet of the sylvan solitude around, and the soft serenity of the sky above."

Longfellow spent nearly a month in the French capital; and in October he resolved to make a foot-excursion along the banks of the Loire, from Orléans to Tours. This region is justly called the garden of France, and the whole valley is one continued vineyard. But I must continue the narrative in the tourist's own words:—

"The vintage had already commenced. The peasantry were busy in the fields; the song that cheered their labor was on the breeze; and the heavy wagon tottered by, laden with the clusters of the vine. Every thing around me wore that happy look which makes the heart glad. In the morning I arose with the lark, and at night I slept where sunset overtook me. The healthy exercise of foot-travelling, the pure, bracing air of autumn, and the cheerful aspect of the whole landscape about me, gave fresh elasticity to a mind not overburdened with care, and made me forget, not only the fatigue of walking, but also the consciousness of being alone.

"My first day's journey brought me at evening to a village, whose name I have forgotten, situated about eight leagues from Orléans. It is a small,



obscure hamlet, not mentioned in the guide-book, and stands upon the precipitous banks of a deep ravine, through which a noisy brook leaps down to turn the ponderous wheel of a thatch-roofed mill. The village-inn stands upon the highway, but the village itself is not visible to the traveller as he passes. It is completely hidden in the lap of a wooded valley, and so embowered in trees that not a roof nor a chimney peeps out to betray its hiding-place. It is like the nest of a ground-swallow, which the passing footstep almost treads upon; and yet it is not seen. I passed by without suspecting that a village was near, and the little inn had a look so uninviting that I did not even enter it.

“After proceeding a mile or two farther, I perceived, upon my left, a village-spire rising over the vineyards. Towards this I directed my footsteps; but it seemed to recede as I advanced, and at last quite disappeared. It was evidently many miles distant; and, as the path I followed descended from the highway, it had gradually sunk beneath a swell of the vine-clad landscape. I now found myself in the midst of an extensive vineyard. It was just sunset, and the last golden rays lingered on the rich and mellow scenery around me. The peasantry were still busy at their task; and the occasional bark of a dog, and the distant sound of an evening-bell, gave fresh romance to the scene. The reality of many a day-dream of childhood, of many a poetic reverie of youth, was before me. I stood at sunset amid the luxuriant vineyards of France!

“The first person I met was a poor old woman, a

little bowed down with age, gathering grapes into a large basket. She was dressed like the poorest class of peasantry, and pursued her solitary task alone, heedless of the cheerful gossip and the merry laugh which came from a band of more youthful vintagers at a short distance from her. She was so intently engaged in her work, that she did not perceive my approach until I bade her good-evening. On hearing my voice, she looked up from her labor, and returned the salutation; and, on my asking her if there were a tavern or a farmhouse in the neighborhood where I could pass the night, she showed me the pathway through the vineyard that led to the village, and then added, with a look of curiosity, —

“‘You must be a stranger, sir, in these parts.’”

“‘Yes: my home is very far from here.’”

“‘How far?’”

“‘More than a thousand leagues.’”

“The old woman looked incredulous.

“‘I came from a distant land beyond the sea.’”

“‘More than a thousand leagues!’ at length repeated she; ‘and why have you come so far from home?’”

“‘To travel, — to see how you live in this country.’”

“‘Have you no relations in your own?’”

“‘Yes: I have both brothers and sisters, a father and’ —

“‘And a mother?’”

“‘Thank Heaven, I have!’”

“‘And did you leave *her*?’”

“Here the old woman gave me a piercing look of

reproof, shook her head mournfully, and, with a deep sigh, as if some painful recollections had been awakened in her bosom, turned again to her solitary task. I felt rebuked, for there is something almost prophetic in the admonitions of the old. The eye of age looks meekly into my heart, the voice of age echoes mournfully through it, the hoary head and palsied hand of age plead irresistibly for its sympathies! I venerate old age; and I love not the man who can look without emotion upon the sunset of life, when the dusk of evening begins to gather over the watery eye, and the shadows of twilight grow broader and deeper upon the understanding!

"I pursued the pathway which led towards the village; and the next person I encountered was an old man, stretched lazily beneath the vines upon a little strip of turf, at a point where four paths met, forming a crossway in the vineyard. He was clad in a coarse garb of gray, with a pair of long gaiters or spatterdashes. Beside him lay a blue cloth cap, a staff, and an old weather-beaten knapsack. I saw at once that he was a foot-traveller like myself, and therefore, without more ado, entered into conversation with him. From his language, and the peculiar manner in which he now and then wiped his upper lip with the back of his hand, as if in search of the mustache which was no longer there, I judged that he had been a soldier. In this opinion I was not mistaken. He had served under Napoleon, and had followed the imperial eagle across the Alps and the Pyrenees, and the burning sands of Egypt. Like every *vieille moustache*, he spake with enthusiasm of

the Little Corporal, and cursed the English, the Germans, the Spanish, and every other race on earth, except the Great Nation, — his own.

“‘I like,’ said he, ‘after a long day’s march, to lie down in this way upon the grass, and enjoy the cool of the evening. It reminds me of the bivouacs of other days, and of old friends who are now up there.’

“‘Here he pointed with his finger to the sky.

“‘They have reached the last *étape* before me, in the long march. But I shall go soon. We shall all meet again at the last roll-call. *Sacré nom de —*! There’s a tear!’

“‘He wiped it away with his sleeve.

“‘Here our colloquy was interrupted by the approach of a group of vintagers, who were returning homeward from their labor. To this party I joined myself, and invited the old soldier to do the same; but he shook his head.

“‘I thank you: my pathway lies in a different direction.’

“‘But there is no other village near, and the sun has already set.’

“‘No matter, I am used to sleeping on the ground. Good-night.’

“‘I left the old man to his meditations, and walked on in company with the vintagers. Following a well-trodden pathway through the vineyards, we soon descended the valley’s slope; and I suddenly found myself in the bosom of one of those little hamlets from which the laborer rises to his toil as the skylark to his song. My companions wished me a good-night, as each entered his own thatch-roofed

cottage; and a little girl led me out to the very inn which an hour or two before I had disdained to enter.

"When I awoke in the morning, a brilliant autumnal sun was shining in at my window. The merry song of birds mingled sweetly with the sound of rustling leaves and the gurgle of the brook. The vintagers were going forth to their toil, the winepress was busy in the shade, and the clatter of the mill kept time to the miller's song. I loitered about the village with a feeling of calm delight. I was unwilling to leave the seclusion of this sequestered hamlet: but at length, with reluctant step, I took the cross-road through the vineyard; and in a moment the little village had sunk again, as if by enchantment, into the bosom of the earth.

"I breakfasted at the town of Mer, and, leaving the high-road to Blois on the right, passed down to the banks of the Loire, through a long, broad avenue of poplars and sycamores. I crossed the river in a boat; and, in the after part of the day, I found myself before the high and massive walls of the *château* of Chambord. This *château* is one of the finest specimens of the ancient Gothic castle to be found in Europe. The little river Cosson fills its deep and ample moat; and above it the huge towers and heavy battlements rise in stern and solemn grandeur, moss-grown with age, and blackened by the storms of three centuries. Within, all is mournful and deserted. The grass has overgrown the pavement of the courtyard, and the rude sculpture upon the walls is broken and defaced. From the courtyard I entered the central tower, and, ascending the principal staircase,



went out upon the battlements. I seemed to have stepped back into the precincts of the feudal ages; and as I passed along through echoing corridors, and vast, deserted halls, stripped of their furniture, and mouldering silently away, the distant past came back upon me, and the times when the clang of arms, and the tramp of mail-clad men, and the sounds of music and revelry and wassail, echoed along those high-vaulted and solitary chambers.

“My third day’s journey brought me to the ancient city of Blois, the chief town of the department of Loire-et-Cher. This city is celebrated for the purity with which even the lower classes of its inhabitants speak their native tongue. It rises precipitously from the northern bank of the Loire, and many of its streets are so steep as to be almost impassable for carriages. On the brow of the hill, overlooking the roofs of the city, and commanding a fine view of the Loire and its noble bridge, and the surrounding country sprinkled with cottages and châteaux, runs an ample terrace, planted with trees, and laid out as a public walk. The view from this terrace is one of the most beautiful in France. But what most strikes the eye of the traveller at Blois is an old, though still unfinished, castle. Its huge parapets of hewn stone stand upon either side of the street; but they have walled up the wide gateway, from which the colossal drawbridge was to have sprung high in air, connecting together the main towers of the building, and the two hills upon whose slope its foundations stand. The aspect of this vast pile is gloomy and desolate. It seems as if the strong hand of the builder had

been arrested in the midst of his task by the stronger hand of death; and the unfinished fabric stands a lasting monument, both of the power and weakness of man, — of his vast desires, his sanguine hopes, his ambitious purposes, — and of the unlooked-for conclusion, where all these desires and hopes and purposes are so often arrested. There is also at Blois another ancient château, to which some historic interest is attached, as being the scene of the massacre of the Duke of Guise.

“On the following day I left Blois for Amboise, and, after walking several leagues along the dusty highway, crossed the river in a boat to the little village of Moines, which lies amid luxuriant vineyards upon the southern bank of the Loire. From Moines to Amboise the road is truly delightful. The rich lowland scenery, by the margin of the river, is verdant, even in October; and occasionally the landscape is diversified with the picturesque cottages of the vintagers cut in the rock along the roadside, and overhung by the thick foliage of the vines above them.

“At Amboise I took a cross-road, which led me to the romantic borders of the Cher and the château of Chenonceau. This beautiful château, as well as that of Chambord, was built by the gay and munificent Francis the First. One is a specimen of strong and massive architecture, — a dwelling for a warrior; but the other is of a lighter and more graceful construction, and was destined for those soft languishments of passion with which the fascinating Diane de Poitiers had filled the bosom of that voluptuous monarch.

“The château of Chenonceau is built upon arches across the river Cher, whose waters are made to supply the deep moat at each extremity. There is a spacious court-yard in front, from which a drawbridge conducts to the outer hall of the castle. There the armor of Francis the First still hangs upon the wall, — his shield and helm and lance, — as if the chivalrous prince had just exchanged them for the silken robes of the drawing-room. From this hall a door opens into a long gallery, extending the whole length of the building across the Cher. The walls of the gallery are hung with the faded portraits of the long line of the descendants of Hugh Capet ; and the windows, looking up and down the stream, command a fine reach of pleasant river scenery. This is said to be the only château in France in which the ancient furniture of its original age is preserved. In one part of the building, you are shown the bed-chamber of Diane de Poitiers, with its antique chairs covered with faded damask and embroidery, her bed, and a portrait of the royal favorite hanging over the mantel-piece. In another, you see the apartment of the infamous Catherine de’ Medici ; a venerable arm-chair and an autograph letter of Henry the Fourth ; and in an old laboratory, among broken crucibles and neckless retorts, and drums and trumpets, and skins of wild beasts, and other ancient lumber of various kinds, are to be seen the bed-posts of Francis the First. Doubtless the naked walls and the vast, solitary chambers of an old and desolate château inspire a feeling of greater solemnity and awe ; but when the antique furniture of the olden time remains, — the

faded tapestry on the walls, and the arm-chair by the fireside, — the effect upon the mind is more magical and delightful. The old inhabitants of the place, long gathered to their fathers, though living still in history, seem to have left their halls for the chase or the tournament; and, as the heavy door swings upon its reluctant hinge, one almost expects to see the gallant princes and courtly dames enter those halls again, and sweep in stately procession along the silent corridors.

“Rapt in such fancies as these, and gazing on the beauties of this noble edifice, and the soft scenery around it, I lingered, unwilling to depart, till the rays of the setting sun, streaming through the dusty windows, admonished me that the day was drawing rapidly to a close. I sallied forth from the southern gate of the château, and, crossing the broken draw-bridge, pursued a pathway along the bank of the river, still gazing back upon those towering walls, now bathed in the rich glow of sunset, till a turn in the road and a clump of woodland at length shut them out from my sight.

“A short time after candle-lighting, I reached the little tavern of the Boule d’Or, a few leagues from Tours, where I passed the night. The following morning was lowering and sad. A veil of mist hung over the landscape; and ever and anon a heavy shower burst from the overburdened clouds, that were driving by before a high and piercing wind. This unpropitious state of the weather detained me until noon, when a cabriolet for Tours drove up; and, taking a seat within it, I left the hostess of the

Boule d'Or in the middle of a long story about a rich countess, who always alighted there when she passed that way. We drove leisurely along through a beautiful country, till at length we came to the brow of a steep hill, which commands a fine view of the city of Tours and its delightful environs. But the scene was shrouded by the heavy, drifting mist, through which I could trace but indistinctly the graceful sweep of the Loire, and the spires and roofs of the city far below me.

“The city of Tours and the delicious plain in which it lies have been too often described by other travellers to render a new description, from so listless a pen as mine, either necessary or desirable. After a sojourn of two cloudy and melancholy days, I set out on my return to Paris, by the way of Vendôme and Chartres. I stopped a few hours at the former place, to examine the ruins of a château built by Jeanne d'Albret, mother of Henry the Fourth. It stands upon the summit of a high and precipitous hill, and almost overhangs the town beneath. The French Revolution has completed the ruin that time had already begun; and nothing now remains but a broken and crumbling bastion, and here and there a solitary tower dropping slowly to decay. In one of these is the grave of Jeanne d'Albret. A marble entablature in the wall above contains the inscription, which is nearly effaced; though enough still remains to tell the curious traveller that there lies buried the mother of the ‘Bon Henri.’ To this is added a prayer that the repose of the dead may be respected.



"Here ended my foot-excursion. The object of my journey was accomplished; and, delighted with this short ramble through the valley of the Loire, I took my seat in the diligence for Paris, and, on the following day, was again swallowed up in the crowds of the metropolis, like a drop in the bosom of the sea."

The winter of 1826-7 was spent wholly in Paris; and Longfellow now devoted most of his time to acquiring a more intimate knowledge of the French language, and of the literature of France. He was almost a perfect stranger in the city, having no friends except those to whom he had introduced himself, and by whom he had been hospitably welcomed. To be sure, he had brought with him from America letters of introduction to certain persons of note and of influence in Paris; but he chose to have little to do with these, and to rely upon himself as much as possible. The knowledge of the language, which he had acquired in college, although somewhat superficial, served him quite well; and it was not long before he was able to converse with considerable readiness with those with whom he was brought in contact.

Nor did he pursue the course of study carelessly and without system. One hour each day through the season, he took lessons of an experienced teacher, was a frequent visitor at the several reading-rooms, and often went to the theatres, where he would follow the actors with a printed copy of the play before him. As it happened, most of the plays were the compositions of the standard authors of France; for

not yet had the drama degenerated into the low tone and anomalous character that it exhibits on the French stage of to-day. Longfellow was also a frequent auditor in the lecture-rooms, where he profited by the words of wisdom that fell from the lips of some of the most distinguished scholars and orators of France.

Not the smallest portion of his time was consumed in the quiet of his own lodgings. Here he first became acquainted with the *fabliaux*, or metrical tales of the Trouvères, the troubadours of the North. Of these he made several translations, a few of them being still preserved.

The winter had barely come to an end, when Longfellow again set out on a fresh tour of the country, this time through the south of France. For "five weary days and four weary nights" he was travelling on the road leading from Paris to Bordeaux. On leaving Orléans, instead of following the mail-route through Tours, Poitiers, and Angoulême, and thence on to Bordeaux, he chose a route across the departments of the Indre, Haute-Vienne, and the Dordogne, passing through the provincial capitals of Chateauroux, Limoges, and Périgueux.

Longfellow reached Bordeaux at the height of the carnival season, and left it amid the noise and gayety of the last scene, when all was "so full of mirth and merrymake, that even beggary seemed to have forgotten that it was wretched, and gloried in the ragged masquerade of one poor holiday." To this scene of noise succeeded the silence and solitude of the Landes of Gascony. On leaving Bayonne, the

landscape assumed a character of greater beauty and sublimity. Ere long, rose the Pyrenees, —

“Bounded afar by peak aspiring bold,  
Like giant capped with helm of burnished gold.”

“Just at nightfall we entered the town of St. Jean de Luz, and dashed down its narrow streets at full gallop. The little madcap postilion cracked his knotted whip incessantly, and the sound echoed back from the high dingy walls like the report of a pistol. The coach-wheels nearly touched the houses on each side of us; the idlers in the street jumped right and left to save themselves; window-shutters flew open in all directions; a thousand heads popped out from cellar and upper story; ‘*Sac-r-ré matin!*’ shouted the postilion, — and we rattled on like an earthquake.

“St. Jean de Luz is a smoky little fishing-town, situated on the low grounds at the mouth of the Nivelle; and a bridge connects it with the faubourg of Sibourne, which stands on the opposite bank of the river. I had no time, however, to note the peculiarities of the place, for I was whirled out of it with the same speed and confusion with which I had been whirled in; and I can only recollect the sweep of the road across the Nivelle, the church of Sibourne by the water’s edge, the narrow streets, the smoky-looking houses with red window-shutters, and ‘a very ancient and fish-like smell.’

“I passed by moonlight the little river Bidasoa, which forms the boundary between France and Spain, and, when the morning broke, found myself

far up among the mountains of San Salvador, the most westerly links of the great Pyrenean chain. The mountains around me were neither rugged nor precipitous, but they rose one above another in a long, majestic swell; and the trace of the ploughshare was occasionally visible to their summits. They seemed entirely destitute of trees; and, as the season of vegetation had not yet commenced, their huge outlines lay black and barren and desolate against the sky. But it was a glorious morning; and the sun rose up into a cloudless heaven, and poured a flood of gorgeous splendor over the mountain landscape, as if proud of the realm he shone upon. The scene was enlivened by the dashing of a swollen mountain-brook, whose course we followed for miles down the valley, as it leaped onward to its journey's end, now breaking into a white cascade, and now foaming and chafing beneath a rustic bridge. Now and then we drove through a dilapidated town, with a group of idlers at every corner, wrapped in tattered brown cloaks, and smoking their little paper cigars in the sun; then would succeed a desolate tract of country, cheered only by the tinkle of a mule-bell, or the song of a muleteer; then we would meet a solitary traveller mounted on horseback, and wrapped in the ample folds of his cloak, with a gun hanging at the pommel of his saddle. Occasionally, too, among the bleak, inhospitable hills, we passed a rude little chapel, with a cluster of ruined cottages around it; and whenever our carriage stopped at the relay, or loitered slowly up the hillside, a crowd of children would gather around us, with little images and cruci-

fixes for sale, curiously ornamented with ribbons, and bits of tawdry finery.

"A day's journey from the frontier brought us to Vitoria, where the diligence stopped for the night. I spent the scanty remnant of daylight in rambling about the streets of the city, with no other guide than the whim of the moment. Now I plunged down a dark and narrow alley, now emerged into a wide street or a spacious market-place, and now aroused the drowsy echoes of a church or cloister with the sound of my intruding footsteps. But descriptions of churches and public squares are dull and tedious matters for those readers who are in search of amusement, and not of instruction; and, if any one has accompanied me thus far on my fatiguing journey towards the Spanish capital, I will readily excuse him from the toil of an evening ramble through the streets of Vitoria.

"On the following morning we left the town, long before daybreak; and, during our forenoon's journey, the postilion drew up at an inn, on the southern slope of the Sierra de San Lorenzo, in the province of Old Castile. The house was an old, dilapidated tenement, built of rough stone, and coarsely plastered upon the outside. The tiled roof had long been the sport of wind and rain, the motley coat of plaster was broken and time-worn, and the whole building sadly out of repair; though the fanciful mouldings under the eaves, and the curiously carved wood-work that supported the little balcony over the principal entrance, spoke of better days gone by. The whole building reminded me of a dilapidated Spanish



don, down at the heel and out at elbows, but with here and there a remnant of former magnificence peeping through the loop-holes of his tattered cloak.

"A wide gateway ushered the traveller into the interior of the building, and conducted him to a low-roofed apartment, paved with round stones, and serving both as a court-yard and a stable. It seemed to be a neutral ground for man and beast, — a little republic, where horse and rider had common privileges, and mule and muleteer lay cheek by jowl. In one corner a poor jackass was patiently devouring a bundle of musty straw; in another, its master lay sound asleep, with his saddle-cloth for a pillow; here a group of muleteers were quarrelling over a pack of dirty cards; and there the village barber, with a self-important air, stood laving the alcalde's chin from the helmet of Mambrino. On the wall a little taper glimmered feebly before an image of St. Anthony; directly opposite these a leathern wine-bottle hung by the neck from a pair of ox-horns. and the pavement below was covered with a curious medley of boxes and bags and cloaks and pack-saddles, and sacks of grain and skins of wine, and all kinds of lumber.

"A small door upon the right led us into the inn-kitchen. It was a room about ten feet square, and literally all chimney; for the hearth was in the centre of the floor, and the walls sloped upward in the form of a long, narrow pyramid, with an opening at the top for the escape of the smoke. Quite round this little room ran a row of benches, upon which sat one or two grave personages smoking paper cigars.

Upon the hearth blazed a handful of fagots, whose bright flame danced merrily among a motley congregation of pots and kettles; and a long wreath of smoke wound lazily up through the huge tunnel of the roof above. The walls were black with soot, and ornamented with sundry legs of bacon and festoons of sausages; and, as there were no windows in this dingy abode, the only light which cheered the darkness within came flickering from the fire upon the hearth, and the smoky sunbeams that peeped down the long-necked chimney.

“I had not been long seated by the fire, when the tinkling of mule-bells, the clatter of hoofs, and the hoarse voice of a muleteer in the outer apartment, announced the arrival of new guests. A few moments afterward the kitchen-door opened, and a person entered, whose appearance strongly arrested my attention. It was a tall, athletic figure, with the majestic carriage of a grandee, and a dark, sunburnt countenance, that indicated an age of about fifty years. His dress was singular, and such as I had not before seen. He wore a round hat with wide, flapping brim, from beneath which his long black hair hung in curls upon his shoulders; a leather jerkin, with cloth sleeves, descended to his hips; around his waist was closely buckled a leather belt, with a cartouch-box on one side; a pair of loose trousers of black serge hung in ample folds to the knees, around which they were closely gathered by embroidered garters of blue silk; and black broadcloth leggings, buttoned close to the calves, and strapped over a pair of brown leather shoes, completed the singular dress

of the stranger. He doffed his hat as he entered, and saluting the company with a '*Dios guarde á Ustedes, caballeros*' ('God guard you, gentlemen'), took a seat by the fire, and entered into conversation with those around him.

"As my curiosity was not a little excited by the peculiar dress of this person, I inquired of a traveling companion, who sat at my elbow, who and what this new-comer was. From him I learned that he was a muleteer of the Maragatería, — a name given to a cluster of small towns which lie in the mountainous country between Astorga and Villafranca, in the western corner of the kingdom of Leon.

"'Nearly every province in Spain,' said he, 'has its peculiar costume, as you will see when you have advanced farther into our country. For instance, the Catalonians wear crimson caps, hanging down upon the shoulder like a sack; wide pantaloons of green velvet, long enough in the waistband to cover the whole breast; and a little strip of a jacket, made of the same material, and so short as to bring the pocket directly under the armpit. The Valencians, on the contrary, go almost naked: a linen shirt; white linen trousers, reaching no lower than the knees; and a pair of coarse leather sandals complete their simple garb: it is only in mid-winter that they indulge in the luxury of a jacket. The most beautiful and expensive costume, however, is that of Andalusia: it consists of a velvet jacket, faced with rich and various-colored embroidery, and covered with tassels and silken cord; a waistcoat of some gay color; a silken handkerchief round the neck, and a

crimson sash round the waist; breeches that button down each side; gaiters and shoes of white leather, and a handkerchief of bright-colored silk wound about the head like a turban, and surmounted by a velvet cap, or a little round hat with a wide band, and an abundance of silken loops and tassels. The Old Castilians are more grave in their attire: they wear a leather breastplate instead of a jacket, breeches and leggings, and a montera cap. This fellow is a Maragato; and in the villages of the Maragatería the costume varies a little from the rest of Leon and Castile.'

"‘If he is indeed a Maragato,’ said I jestingly, ‘who knows but he may be a descendant of the muleteer who behaved so naughtily at Cacabelos, as related in the second chapter of the veracious history of Gil Blas de Santillana?’

"‘¿*Quien sabe?*’ was the reply. ‘Notwithstanding the pride which even the meanest Castilian feels in counting over a long line of good-for-nothing ancestors, the science of genealogy has become of late a very intricate study in Spain.’

"‘Here our conversation was cut short by the *Mayoral* of the diligence, who came to tell us that the mules were waiting; and, before many hours had elapsed, we were scrambling through the square of the ancient city of Burgos. On the morrow we crossed the river Duero and the Guadarrama Mountains, and early in the afternoon entered the ‘Heróica Villa’ of Madrid, by the Puerta de Fuencarral.”

Our traveller loitered in the famous and romantic old city of Madrid until the last of May. Again he

renewed his severer studies, and became enamored of the "soft and yet majestic language that falls like martial music on the ear, and a literature rich in the attractive lore of poetry and fiction." In June he repaired to the village of El Pardillo, situated on the southern slope of the Guadarrama Mountains, just where the last broken spurs of the Sierra stretch forward into the vast table-land of New Castile. He says, —

"In this quiet place I sojourned for a season, accompanied by the publican Don Valentin and his fair daughter Florencia. We took up our abode in the cottage of a peasant named Lucas, an honest tiller of the soil, simple and good-natured, or, in the more emphatic language of Don Valentin, '*un hombre muy infeliz, y sin malicia ninguna.*' Not so his wife Matina: she was a Tartar, and so mettlesome withal, that poor Lucas skulked doggedly about his own premises, with his head down, and his tail between his legs.

"In this little village my occupations were few and simple. My morning's walk was to the Cross of Espalmado, a large wooden crucifix in the fields; the day was passed with books, or with any idle companion I was lucky enough to catch by the button, and bribe with a cigar into a long story, or a little village gossip; and I whiled away the evening in peeping round among the cottagers, studying the beautiful landscape that spread before me, and watching the occasional gathering of a storm about the blue peaks of the Guadarrama Mountains. My favorite haunt was a secluded spot in a little woodland valley,



through which a crystal brook ran brawling along its pebbly channel. There, stretched in the shadow of a tree, I often passed the hours of noontide heat, now reading the magic numbers of Garcilaso, and anon listening to the song of the nightingale overhead; or watching the toil of a patient ant, as he rolled his stone, like Sisyphus, up hill; or the flight of a bee darting from flower to flower, and 'hiding his murmurs in the rose.'

"The village church, too, was a spot around which I occasionally lingered of an evening, when in pensive, or melancholy mood. It is a gloomy little edifice, standing upon the outskirts of the village, and built of dark and unhewn stone, with a spire like a sugar-loaf. There is no grass-plot in front, but a little esplanade beaten hard by the footsteps of the church-going peasantry. The tombstone of one of the patriarchs of the village serves as a doorstep, and a single solitary tree throws its friendly shade upon the portals of the little sanctuary.

"I must not forget, in this place, to make honorable mention of the little great men of El Pardillo. And first in order comes the priest. He was a short, portly man, serious in manner, and of grave and reverend presence; though at the same time there was a dash of the jolly-fat-friar about him; and, on hearing a good joke or a sly innuendo, a smile would gleam in his eye, and play over his round face, like the light of a glowworm. His housekeeper was a brisk, smiling little woman, on the shady side of thirty, and a cousin of his to boot. Whenever she was mentioned, Don Valentin looked wise, as if this

cousinship were apocryphal ; but he said nothing, — not he ; what right had he to be peeping into other people's business, when he had only one eye to look after his own withal ? Next in rank to the dominie was the alcalde, justice of the peace and quorum, a most potent, grave, and reverend personage, with a long beak of a nose, and a pouch under his chin, like a pelican. He was a man of few words, but great in authority ; and his importance was vastly increased in the village by a pair of double-barrelled spectacles, so contrived, that, when bent over his desk and deeply buried in his musty papers, he could look up and see what was going on around him without moving his head, whereby he got the reputation of seeing twice as much as other people. There was the village surgeon, too, a tall man with a varnished hat and a starved dog : he had studied at the University of Salamanca, and was pompous and pedantic, ever and anon quoting some threadbare maxim from the Greek philosophers, and embellishing it with a commentary of his own. Then there was the gray-headed sacristan, who rang the church-bell, played on the organ, and was learned in tombstone-lore ; a politician, who talked me to death about taxes, liberty, and the days of the constitution ; and a notary public, a poor man with a large family, who would make a paper cigar last half an hour, and who kept up his respectability in the village by keeping a horse.

“ Beneath the protecting shade of these great men, full many an inhabitant of El Pardillo was born and buried. The village continued to flourish, a quiet,

happy place, though all unknown to fame. The inhabitants were orderly and industrious, went regularly to mass and confession, kept every saint's day in the calendar, and devoutly hung Judas once a year in effigy. On Sundays and all other holidays, when mass was over, the time was devoted to sports and recreation; and the day passed off in social visiting, and athletic exercises, such as running, leaping, wrestling, pitching quoits, and heaving the bar. When evening came, the merry sound of the guitar summoned to the dance; then every nook and alley poured forth its youthful company, light of heart and heel, and decked out in all the holiday finery of flowers and ribbons and crimson sashes. A group gathered before the cottage-door; the signal was given; and away whirled the merry dancers to the wild music of voice and guitar, and the measured beat of castanet and tambourine.

"I love these rural dances, — from my heart I love them. This world, at best, is so full of care and sorrow, — the life of a poor man is so stained with the sweat of his brow, — there is so much toil and struggling and anguish and disappointment here below, that I gaze with delight on a scene where all these are laid aside and forgotten, and the heart of the toil-worn peasant seems to throw off its load, and to leap to the sound of music, when merrily,

" 'Beneath soft eve's consenting star,  
Fandango twirls his jocund castanet.'

"Not many miles from the village of El Pardillo stands the ruined castle of Villafranca, an ancient

stronghold of the Moors of the fifteenth century. It is built upon the summit of a hill, of easy ascent upon one side, but precipitous and inaccessible on the other.

“One holiday, when mass was said and the whole village was let loose to play, we made a pilgrimage to the ruins of this old Moorish alcázar. Our cavalcade was as motley as that of old,—the pilgrims ‘that toward Canterbury wolden ride;’ for we had the priest, and the doctor of physick, and the man of laws, and a wife of Bath, and many more whom I must leave unsung. Merrily flew the hours and fast; and, sitting after dinner in the gloomy hall of that old castle, many a tale was told, and many a legend and tradition of the past conjured up to satisfy the curiosity of the present.”

Quitting Madrid, Longfellow visited the plains of La Mancha. On the fourth day of the journey, he came to Manzanares, where he dined, was shaved by the village barber, and then was variously entertained by one of the characters of the place. On the twelfth day he arrived at Seville, that “pleasant city, famous for oranges and women.” He was disappointed at finding it less beautiful than his imagination had pictured it. He was disappointed in another respect,—he had come all the way from Madrid to Seville without being robbed!

His impression of Cadiz was more favorable. Indeed, he thought it “beautiful almost beyond imagination.” As he journeyed onward, and crossed the Sierra Nevada, he overtook a solitary rider, who was singing a wild national song, to cheer the loneliness

of his journey. This personage was a contrabandista, — a smuggler between Granada and the seaport of Velez-Malaga. The contrabandista accompanied Longfellow to Granada, which they together entered on a Saturday night. The following morning Longfellow visited the Alhambra, of which he thus writes: —

“This morning I visited the Alhambra, an enchanted palace, whose exquisite beauty baffles the power of language to describe. Its outlines may be drawn, its halls and galleries, its court-yards and its fountains, numbered; but what skilful limner shall portray in words its curious architecture, the grotesque ornaments, the quaint devices, the rich tracery of the walls, the ceilings inlaid with pearl and tortoise-shell? what language paint the magic hues of light and shade, the shimmer of the sunbeam as it falls upon the marble pavement, and the brilliant panels inlaid with many-colored stones? Vague recollections fill my mind, — images dazzling but undefined, like the memory of a gorgeous dream. They crowd my brain confusedly, but they will not stay. They change and mingle, like the tremulous sunshine on the wave, till imagination itself is dazzled, bewildered, overpowered!

“What most arrests the stranger's foot within the walls of the Alhambra is the refinement of luxury which he sees at every step. He lingers in the deserted bath: he pauses to gaze upon the now vacant saloon, where, stretched upon his gilded couch, the effeminate monarch of the East was wooed to sleep by softly breathing music. What more delightful



than this secluded garden, green with the leaf of the myrtle and the orange, and freshened with the gush of fountains, beside whose basin the nightingale still wooes the blushing rose? What more fanciful, more exquisite, more like a creation of Oriental magic, than the lofty tower of the Tocador, its airy sculpture resembling the fretwork of wintry frost, and its windows overlooking the romantic valley of the Darro, and the city, with its gardens, domes, and spires far, far below? Cool through this lattice comes the summer-wind from the icy summits of the Sierra Nevada. Softly in yonder fountain falls the crystal water, dripping from its marble vase with never-ceasing sound. On every side comes up the fragrance of a thousand flowers, the murmur of innumerable leaves; and overhead is a sky where not a vapor floats, as soft and blue and radiant as the eye of childhood!

“Such is the Alhambra of Granada; a fortress, — a palace, — an earthly paradise, — a ruin, wonderful in its fallen greatness!”

Longfellow prolonged his wanderings in France and Spain till the winter season had fairly set in; and on the 15th of December, 1827, he set out to make a tour into Italy. At Marseilles he had met and become acquainted with a pilgrim-scholar like himself, George Washington Greene of East Greenwich, R.I., who had been obliged to leave college in consequence of ill health, and who had now gone to Europe for the purpose of recuperation. Greene was a young man of generous impulses, a hard and ambitious student, and a trusty and faithful friend.

The first meeting of these two spirits was one by the merest chance, but out of it sprang a most intimate and life-long attachment.

Longfellow started with Greene from Marseilles, and, taking the seashore-road through Toulon, Draguignan, and Nice, journeyed on to Genoa. At Toulon the party took a private carriage in order to pursue the tour more leisurely and more at ease. On the 24th, Genoa was reached, — Genoa, the city of palaces. He writes, —

“It was Christmas eve, — a glorious night! I stood at midnight on the wide terrace of our hotel, which overlooks the sea, and, gazing on the tiny and crisping waves that broke in pearly light beneath the moon, sent back my wandering thoughts far over the sea, to a distant home. The jangling music of church-bells aroused me from my dream. It was the sound of jubilee at the approaching festival of the Nativity, and summoned alike the pious devotee, the curious stranger, and the gallant lover to the church of the Annunziata.

“I descended from the terrace, and, groping my way through one of the dark and narrow lanes which intersect the city in all directions, soon found myself in the Strada Nuova. The long line of palaces lay half in shadow, half in light, stretching before me in magical perspective, like the long, vapory opening of a cloud in the summer sky. Following the various groups that were passing onward towards the public square, I entered the church, where midnight mass was to be chanted. A dazzling blaze of light from the high altar shone upon the red marble col-

umns which support the roof, and fell with a solemn effect upon the kneeling crowd that filled the body of the church. All beyond was in darkness; and from that darkness at intervals burst forth the deep voice of the organ and the chanting of the choir, filling the soul with solemnity and awe. And yet among that prostrate crowd, how many had been drawn thither by unworthy motives, — motives even more unworthy than mere idle curiosity! How many sinful purposes arose in souls unpurified, and mocked at the bended knee! How many a heart beat wild with earthly passion, while the unconscious lip repeated the accustomed prayer! Immortal spirit! canst thou so heedlessly resist the imploring voice that calls thee from thine errors and pollutions? Is not the long day long enough, is not the wide world wide enough, has not society frivolity enough for thee, that thou shouldst seek out this midnight hour, this holy place, this solemn sacrifice, to add irreverence to thy folly?

“The city of Genoa is magnificent in parts, but not as a whole. The houses are high, and the streets in general so narrow, that in many of them you may almost step across from side to side. They are built to receive the cool sea-breeze, and shut out the burning sun. Only three of them — if my memory serves me — are wide enough to admit the passage of carriages; and these three form but one continuous street, — the street of palaces. They are the Strada Nuova, the Strada Novissima, and the Strada Balbi, which connect the Piazza Amorosa with the Piazza dell’ Annunziata. These palaces, the Doria, the Du-

razzo, the Ducal Palace, and others of less magnificence, with their vast halls, their marble staircases, vestibules, and terraces, and the aspect of splendor and munificence they wear, have given this commercial city the title of Genoa the Superb. And, as if to humble her pride, some envious rival among the Italian cities has launched at her a biting sarcasm in the well-known proverb, '*Mare senza pesce, uomini senza fede, e donne senza vergogna,*' — 'A sea without fish, men without faith, and women without shame!'"

The tarry at Genoa was not long; and the little party went next to Lucca, thence to Pisa, and finally to Florence, where they took lodgings, and lingered for a few days. I quote, —

"From Florence to Rome I travelled with a vetturino, by the way of Siena. We were six days upon the road, and, like Peter Rugg in the story-book, were followed constantly by clouds and rain. At times the sun, not all-forgetful of the world, peeped from beneath his cowl of mist, and kissed the swarthy face of his beloved land, and then, like an anchorite, withdrew again from earth, and gave himself to heaven. Day after day the mist and the rain were my fellow-travellers; and as I sat wrapped in the thick folds of my Spanish cloak, and looked out upon the misty landscape and the leaden sky, I was continually saying to myself, 'Can this be Italy?' and smiling at the untravelled credulity of those, who, amid the storms of a northern winter, give way to the illusions of fancy, and dream of Italy as a sunny land, where no wintry tempest beats, and where, even in January, the pale invalid may go about

without his umbrella or his India-rubber walk-in-the-waters.

“Notwithstanding all this, with the help of a good constitution and a thick pair of boots, I contrived to see all that was to be seen upon the road. I walked down the long hillside at San Lorenzo, and along the border of the Lake of Bolsena, which, veiled in the driving mist, stretched, like an inland sea, beyond my ken; and through the sacred forest of oak, held in superstitious reverence by the peasant, and inviolate from his axe. I passed a night at Montefiascone, renowned for a delicate Muscat wine, which bears the name of Est, and made a midnight pilgrimage to the tomb of the Bishop John Defourcris, who died a martyr to his love of this wine of Montefiascone.

“ ‘Propter nimum Est, Est, Est,  
Dominus meus mortuus est.’

A marble slab in the pavement, worn by the footsteps of pilgrims like myself, covers the dominie’s ashes. There is a rude figure carved upon it, at whose feet I traced out the cabalistic words, ‘Est, Est, Est.’ The remainder of the inscription was illegible by the flickering light of the sexton’s lantern.

“At Baccano, I first caught sight of the dome of Saint Peter’s. We had entered the desolate Campagna; we passed the tomb of Nero; we approached the Eternal City; but no sound of active life, no thronging crowds, no hum of busy men, announced that we were near the gates of Rome. All was silence, solitude, and desolation.”



But I have not space to give all the details of the various Italian journeys which were made in the course of the year 1828. Of one alone it is necessary to speak, however, on account of the later interest attached to it. In the month of April, Longfellow and Greene found themselves together at Naples. What they were doing is shown by the following letter, written by Greene, and dated April 3, 1867.

“MY DEAR LONGFELLOW, — Thirty-nine years ago this month of April, you and I were together at Naples, wandering up and down amid the wonders of that historical city, and, consciously in some things and unconsciously in others, laying up those precious associations which are youth's best preparation for age. We were young then, with life all before us; and, in the midst of the records of a great past, our thoughts would still turn to our own future. Yet, even in looking forward, they caught the coloring of that past, making things bright to our eyes, which, from a purely American point of view, would have worn a different aspect. From then till now the spell of those days has been upon us.

“One day — I shall never forget it — we returned at sunset from a long afternoon amid the statues and relics of the Museo Borbonico. Evening was coming on with a sweet promise of the stars; and our minds and hearts were so full that we could not think of shutting ourselves up in our rooms, or of mingling with the crowd on the Toledo. We wanted to be alone, and yet to feel that there was life all around us. We went up to the flat roof of the house, where, as we walked, we could look down into the crowded street, and out upon the wonderful bay, and across the bay to Ischia and Capri and Sorrento, and

over the housetops and villas and vineyards to Vesuvius. The ominous pillar of smoke hung suspended above the fatal mountain, reminding us of Pliny, its first and noble victim. A golden vapor crowned the bold promontory of Sorrento, and we thought of Tasso. Capri was calmly sleeping, like a sea-bird upon the waters; and we seemed to hear the voice of Tacitus from across the gulf of eighteen centuries, telling us that the historian's pen is still powerful to absolve or condemn long after the imperial sceptre has fallen from the withered hand. There, too, lay the native island of him whose daring mind conceived the fearful vengeance of the Sicilian Vespers. We did not yet know Nicolini, but his grand verses had already begun the work of regeneration in the Italian heart. Virgil's tomb was not far off. The spot consecrated by Sannazaro's ashes was near us; and over all, with a thrill like that of solemn music, fell the splendor of the Italian sunset.

“We talked and mused by turns, till the twilight deepened, and the stars came forth to mingle their mysterious influence with the overmastering magic of the scene. It was then that you unfolded to me your plans of life, and showed me from what ‘deep cisterns’ you had already learned to draw. From that day the office of literature took a new place in my thoughts. I felt its forming power as I had never felt it before, and began to look with a calm resignation upon its trials, and with true appreciation upon its reward. Thenceforth, little as I have done of what I wished to do, literature has been the inspiration, the guide, and the comfort, of my life. And now, in giving to the world the first, perhaps the only, work for which I dare hope a life beyond my own, the memory of those days comes back to me, and tells me, that, loving me still in the fulness of your fame as you loved me in

the hour of aspiration, you will not be unwilling to see your name united with mine upon these pages, which, but for your counsel and your sympathy, would never have been written.”<sup>1</sup>

In midsummer Longfellow was again in Rome. His lodgings were in a private house in the Piazza Navona, the very heart of the city. Of his manner of life here he writes, —

“My mornings are spent in visiting the wonders of Rome, in studying the miracles of ancient and modern art, or in reading at the public libraries. We breakfast at noon, and dine at eight in the evening. After dinner comes the *conversazione*, enlivened with music, and the meeting of travellers, artists, and literary men from every quarter of the globe. At midnight, when the crowd is gone, I retire to my chamber, and, poring over the gloomy pages of Dante or ‘Bandello’s Laughing Tale,’ protract my nightly vigil till the morning star is in the sky.

“Our windows look out upon the square, which circumstance is a source of infinite enjoyment to me. Directly in front, with its fantastic belfries and swelling dome, rises the church of St. Agnes; and, sitting by the open window, I note the busy scene below, enjoy the cool air of morning and evening, and even feel the freshness of the fountain, as its waters leap in mimic cascades down the sides of the rock.”

The month of September was spent at the vil-

<sup>1</sup> Dedication, in the Life of Nathanael Greene.

lage of La Riccia, which stands upon the western declivity of the Albanian Hills, looking towards Rome. "My daily occupations in this delightful spot," writes Longfellow again, "were such as an idle man usually whiles away his time withal in such a rural residence. I read Italian poetry, strolled in the Chigi Park, rambled about the wooded environs of the village, took an airing on a jackass, threw stones into the Alban Lake, and, being seized at intervals with the artist-mania, that came upon me like an intermittent fever, sketched — or thought I did — the trunk of a hollow tree, or the spire of a distant church, or a fountain in the shade."<sup>1</sup>

At the close of autumn, Longfellow left Rome for Venice, "crossing the Apennines by the wild gorge of the Stretta, in a drenching rain." From Venice he went to Trieste, and thence to Vienna. From Vienna he passed northward, visiting Prague, Dresden, and Leipsic; and then, for a few months, he settled himself down in the scholastic shades of Göttingen. Having completed a course of study at the university, he passed on to Frankfort-on-the-Main; thence to Mayence, where he took steamer down the Rhine. The rest of his wanderings lay through the sands of Holland, and thence, by way of England, home.

<sup>1</sup> From *Outre-Mer*, edition 1835.

## CHAPTER VI.

## LONGFELLOW A PROFESSOR IN BOWDOIN COLLEGE.

*(1829-1835.)*

MR. LONGFELLOW began his instruction in Bowdoin College in the month of September, 1829. He was then a young man of twenty-two, with a reputation already won by his "April Day" and his "Woods in Winter," poems which had not only been extensively copied by the newspapers, but had also found a place in several of the school-readers in use at that time. He was, moreover, fully equipped for his new position; for, to the attainments afforded by a college education, he added the rich experiences of a long residence abroad.

"My recollections of Professor Longfellow," writes one of the members of the class of 1830, "are as fresh as though it was but yesterday that I saw him come into the classroom for the first time. He was, of course, the youngest member of the faculty; but he certainly commanded as much respect as did any of the older teachers. His manner was invariably gentle, and full of that charming courtesy which it never lacked throughout his whole life. At the same time, he never forgot his position; he ever manifested a consciousness that he himself was the



instructor, and we the instructed; he the man at the wheel, we the ones to show respect and confidence. He was always on the alert, quick to hear, and ready to respond. We were fond of him from the start: his speech charmed us; his earnest and dignified demeanor inspired us; and his erect, manly form excited our admiration. A better teacher, a kindlier heart, a more sympathetic friend, never addressed a class of young men. If he had not won renown as the most beloved of American poets, he could not have failed to become famous as an American teacher. When I recall how anxious he ever was for our progress, how hard he worked to push us along, I cannot refrain from quoting one of his own stanzas, — the one which, to my mind, so beautifully expresses the motive by which he was always governed in his capacity as an instructor: —

“Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,  
Is our destined end or way;  
But to act, that each to-morrow  
Find us farther than to-day.”

A similar tribute of respect is paid by another graduate of Bowdoin, President Hamlin of Middlebury College. “When I entered Bowdoin College in 1830,” he writes, “Professor Longfellow had occupied the chair but one year. Our class numbered fifty-two, the largest freshman class that had, up to that time, entered college; and many of its members were attracted by Longfellow’s reputation. His intercourse with the students was perfectly simple, frank, and gentlemanly. He neither flattered nor





Henry W. Longfellow.

At the Age of Twenty-Five

repelled: he neither sought popularity nor avoided it. He was a close and ardent student in all Spanish and French literature. He had no time to fritter away. But he always and evidently enjoyed having students come to him with any reasonable question about languages, authors, literature, mediæval or modern history, more especially the former. They always left him, not only with admiration, but guided and helped and inspired."

Longfellow was not only beloved by the students, but he was also highly esteemed by all his associates in the faculty. Only one of that famous body still lives, the venerable Rev. Dr. Packard. It is his testimony that Longfellow "assumed the duties of the office, which he faithfully and successfully performed until, with the regret and disappointment of his colleagues and the authorities of the college, he accepted a similar position at Harvard."

The same authority states further that, "Longfellow approved himself a teacher who never wearied of his work. He won by his gentle grace, and commanded respect by his self-respect, and his respect for his office, never allowing an infringement of the decorum of the recitation-room."

As we have already seen, the department of modern languages and literature was a new one in the college; and, after the various steps at organization had been taken, it next became necessary to provide for the text-books. This responsibility devolved upon the young professor; and how well he acquitted himself, it will soon appear.

One of his first acts, as a professor, was to supply

the deficiency existing of a suitable text-book on the study of the French language. He surveyed the field thoroughly, examined carefully such books as had already been published, and decided at length to translate and edit a work by a foreign author, rather than to prepare an original work. Charles François L'Homond, a professor in the University of Paris, was the author of a small elementary grammar, which had found favor on the continent of Europe, and of which several copies had found their way to this country, where they were in use among private instructors. The work had never, however, been translated. Longfellow undertook the task of preparing an English version of the work, and of adding such notes and illustrations as were deemed necessary for American schools and colleges. It was completed and published in the year 1830, and was at once adopted as a text-book, not only in Bowdoin College, but also in many other institutions of learning, both public and private. The book passed rapidly through many editions, and for a long time was regarded by teachers as the best French grammar in use in America. It was not completely superseded until twenty years after the period of its first publication.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The full title is as follows: *Elements of French Grammar. By M. L'Homond, Professeur-Erémite in the University of Paris. Translated from the French, with Notes and such Illustrations as were thought necessary for the American Pupil. For the use of Schools. By an Instructor. Samuel Colman: Portland. Griffin's Press: Brunswick. 1830. [12mo. pp. 108.]*

In the same year Professor Longfellow prepared for the use of his classes two other works :—

1. *Manuel de Proverbes Dramatiques. Portland : S. Colman. 1830.*



In April, 1831, appeared Professor Longfellow's first contribution to "The North American Review." It was entitled the "Origin and Progress of the French Language," and extended over forty pages of the periodical. After the usual custom, it bore no signature. In this article, which is characterized by a high degree of scholarship and accuracy of interpretation, the author began at the beginning.

"It is our intention," he stated, "in the present article to give our readers some account of the origin and progress of the French language, — 'a tongue most dear unto thee,' as the ecclesiastical historian, Howell, says, 'if thou beest not a pedant, a mere Englishman, art a traveller, and hast any thing in thee of good breeding.' The works, whose titles stand at the head of this article, are the sources from which we shall draw most of our facts and illustrations in reference to the subject before us ;<sup>1</sup> and, in order to execute our task the more efficiently, we shall commence with the earliest existing monuments of the ancient *Romance*, or *Roman Rustic* language, and, by reference to literary documents of successive periods, trace the progress and improvement of the French down to the close of the sixteenth century, when, to

2. Montgomery, Jorge [Washington]. *Novelas Espanolas. El Serrano de las Alpujarras; y El Cuadro Misterioso.* [Brunswick: Griffin. 1830.]

<sup>1</sup> The following were the sources named at the head of the article: —

1. *Choix des Poésies originales des Troubadours.* Par M. Raynouard.

2. *Second Mémoire sur l'origine et les Revolutions de la Langue Française.* Par M. Duclos.

3. *Les Poètes François depuis le XII. siècle jusqu' à Malherbe.*

use the quaint phraseology of an old writer, it had become *gente, propice, suffisante assez et du tout elegante pour exprimer de bonne foy tout ce que l'ou sçauroit excogiter, soit en amours ou autrement.*"

The author then proceeds to trace the origin of the French language from the corrupted union of the Latin with the northern dialects of Gaul; then speaks of the *Roman Rustic*, and cites a specimen of it as it was spoken in France during the first half of the ninth century; also specimens of the religious poems and other devotional writings of the Waldensians. He next gives extracts from the poesy of the Troubadours, and lays down the assertion that, "the difference between the Waldensian and the Provençal is very trifling, and confined almost entirely to the terminations of words." He now proceeds to show how the *Roman Wallon* dialect was developed in the provinces north of the Loire; how that in the tenth century it became the court-language of William Longue-Epée, Duke of Normandy, and, at the reign of William the Conqueror, it was called French. At the close of the eleventh century, it ceased to be called the *Roman Wallon*. The remainder of the article deals with the progress of the French language through the thirteenth century, on through the fourteenth, — the age of Froissart and the famous Oliver Basselin; on through the fifteenth, when "the mists of antique phrase begin to roll away, and we no longer grope along in the obscurity of a barbarous dialect," — the era of Charles d'Orléans, father of Louis XII.; and, finally, on through the sixteenth century, and through the reign of Francis I., sur-

named the *Father of Letters*. Numerous extracts in the original and translations (I think there is not one by the author) are scattered about in the article, which closes as follows:—

“But enough. We have thus taken a rapid, and in some respects a superficial, view of the origin and progress of the French language. We have purposely confined ourselves to the general outline of the subject, rather than to seeking derivations and tracing out analogies. When Ménage published his learned and critical work upon this subject, it was said of him, ‘Ménage is the most troublesome man in the world: he cannot let a single word go without a passport; he must know whence it comes, the road it has pursued, and whither it is going.’ We have no fears of falling under an imputation of such rigid scrutiny. The increasing attention paid to the study of the French throughout this section of our country, and its importance as a branch of elementary and liberal education, sufficiently warrant us to devote a few pages of our journal to this subject; and, in so doing, we have dealt largely in extracts and illustrations, and have avoided trespassing on the precincts of etymology, in order to give the subject a more agreeable aspect in the eyes of our readers.”

In July, 1831, Joseph T. Buckingham began the publication in Boston of “The New-England Magazine.” Each number comprised ninety-six pages, was issued once a month, and on the whole was, of the kind, one of the best periodicals ever printed in this country. It was published and conducted by

Mr. Buckingham and his son until the son's death in 1833, and after that by the father alone, who was for a time a fair representative of Boston culture. In 1835 it became "The American Monthly Magazine," and the office of publication was transferred to New York.

Many persons contributed to the pages of "The New-England Magazine," whose names have since become prominent in American literature. To say nothing of those whose work has passed into oblivion, simply because it was the work of aspirants who never came to fame, one may read in the magazine articles, sketches, and poems by Edward Everett, George S. Hillard, Joseph Story, Epes Sargent, Dr. S. G. Howe, Richard Hildreth, Dr. Peabody, Dr. Withington, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and Professor Longfellow. But few of the articles, however, are signed; and, as might be expected, the golden compensation allowed for them was exceedingly small.<sup>1</sup>

So far as I am aware, Professor Longfellow's contributions to the magazine are confined to a series of sketches, which he published at irregular intervals, under the name or title of "The Schoolmaster." These sketches interest us from their relation to

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting, as a bit of literary history, to find that Dr. Holmes published a trial chapter of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* in *The New-England Magazine*; but so completely had the title disappeared, that but few remembered it when he resumed it twenty-five years afterwards in the early numbers of *The Atlantic Monthly*. Many of his best poems also appeared in these pages; and a curious experiment headed *Report of the Editorial Department*, and signed "O. W. H.," will be found in the number for January, 1833.

work which he produced later, and which he publicly acknowledged. The first instalment of "The Schoolmaster" appeared in the number for July, 1831,—the initial number of the magazine. The following motto from Franklin stands at the head of the chapter:—

"My character, indeed, I would favor you with, but that I am cautious of praising myself, lest I should be told my trumpeter's dead; and I cannot find in my heart at present to say any thing to my own disadvantage."

The chapter is written in the first person, and opens as follows:—

"I am a schoolmaster in the little village of Sharon. A son of New England, I have been educated in all her feelings and prejudices. To her maternal care I owe the little that is good within me; and upon her bosom I hope to repose hereafter when my worldly task is done, and my soul, like a rejoicing schoolboy, shall close its weary book, and burst forth from this earthly schoolhouse. My childhood was passed at my native village, in the usual amusements and occupations of that age; but, as I grew up, I became satiated with the monotony of my life. A restless spirit prompted me to visit foreign countries. I said, with the cosmopolite, 'the world is a kind of book in which he who has seen his own country only has read but one page.' Guided by this feeling, I became a traveller. I have traversed France on foot, smoked my pipe in a Flemish inn"—

These words now become familiar to the reader,



for he at once recognizes in them the passage in the chapter entitled "The Pilgrim of Outre-Mer." "The Schoolmaster," however, soon recovers its own separate character; and, for several pages, one reads of the return of the narrator to his native village, and thenceforth of his travels by memory.

The second chapter of "The Schoolmaster" appeared in the number for September, 1831, and is substantially the same as "The Norman Diligence" in "Outre-Mer." In the last-named work, the author simply mentions the cabaret; but in "The Schoolmaster" he sketches it fully, and introduces a version of an old French song of the fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

The third chapter of "The Schoolmaster" was published in April, 1832. It is entitled "The Village of Auteuil," and is very much the same chapter as in "Outre-Mer." It is worthy of note that Dr. Dardonville in "The Schoolmaster" becomes Dentdelion in "Outre-Mer," and that some new matter is introduced into the last-named work.

In July, 1832, the fourth instalment, entitled "Recollections of the Metropolis," was printed; and this was followed by the fifth chapter, continuing the subject, in the number for October of the same year. The fourth chapter gives the details of a stroll in Paris, and the fifth continues the walk and introduces a romantic story. Both are omitted in "Outre-Mer." The sixth chapter, published in February, 1833, resumes the walk, interrupted by the story,

<sup>1</sup> Longfellow, in *The Poets and Poetry of Europe*, prints Oliver Basselin's modernized version of the same song as translated by Oxenford, but, strangely enough, says nothing of his own earlier rendering, which is as good if not better.

and brings the reader finally to the gates of the cemetery of Père-la-Chaise. At this point the serial comes suddenly to an end, and for this reason: the publication of the first part of "Outre-Mer," containing, as we now know, much of the material used in the first three chapters of "The Schoolmaster," has been commenced. The last three chapters of "The Schoolmaster" were never reprinted.

On Sept. 14, 1831, Professor Longfellow was united in marriage to Mary Storer Potter of Portland. She was the daughter of the Hon. Barrett Potter—a judge of the probate court—and Anne Storer Potter. The judge was well known, and was generally regarded as a man of strong character, great severity of manners, and of marked positiveness in all his opinions. In regard to educational matters he cherished most decided views. He was an old-fashioned classical scholar himself, and ardently believed that boys should be nurtured upon Greek and Latin at the earliest moment, but that girls should be taught nothing of these languages. For them he thought the modern languages, modern literature, and natural science more suitable. His daughter Mary had a strong taste for all modern languages, and for mathematics as well. Her notebooks, which are still preserved by her family, "give ample and accurate reports, recorded as being from memory, of a series of astronomical lectures; and she learned to calculate eclipses, which must have been quite beyond the average attainments of young girls of her day." Before her marriage, Miss Potter was for several years a pupil of the excellent school

of Miss Cushing, at Hingham, Mass.; and it is reported that "all her school-papers, abstracts, and compositions show a thoughtful and well-trained mind. Some exhibit a metaphysical turn; others are girlish studies in history and geography; but the love of literature is visible everywhere, in copious extracts from the favorite authors of that day, — Cowper, Young, Mrs. Hemans, Bernard Barton, and even Coleridge and Shelley."

Of Mrs. Longfellow's personal appearance, and qualities of mind, all who remember her speak with one voice. The characterization of one who knew her intimately and as a dear friend agrees with that of every one whom I have consulted. "She was a lovely woman," writes this friend, "in character and appearance. Gentle, refined, and graceful, with an attractive manner which won all hearts. The few first years of her married life were spent here (Brunswick); and, as Professor Longfellow took a house in this neighborhood, we were on most intimate terms."<sup>1</sup>

As signified in the foregoing quotation, Professor Longfellow, after his marriage, took his fair bride to Brunswick, where, in a simple, vine-covered cottage, he founded a home of taste, refinement, and graceful hospitality. It was here, in that beautiful New-England town, with the river Androscoggin "on its way" to the sea at one end of the wide village-street, and at the other the pine-groves in which the college buildings stood secluded, that

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Miss Emeline Weld of Brunswick, Me., addressed to the author.

Longfellow walked out of his youth into manhood, and "love's young dream" moved his inmost being.

Just across the fields, in those days, from the academic groves, stood a large square white house, with four square rooms on each of the two stories, and a hallway running through from west to east. It was a type of house familiar to the last generation, but now gradually disappearing. This was the home of Professor Cleaveland, whom Longfellow loved as a father, and with whom, when other duties failed to call him elsewhere, he and Mrs. Longfellow were wont to pass many a quiet evening. Longfellow still played upon the flute, as in his student-days; and within the hospitable mansion of the older professor stood—and still stands—the piano, or "harpsichord," that accompanied the poet when he spoke with "music's golden tongue."<sup>1</sup>

It is pleasant to reflect upon these early years of the poet's life, which opened so happily and promised so much. The nuptial event of 1831 had a marked influence on the development of his genius; it gave him new ideas and new thoughts: and then came the sorrowful sequel, which served to blend all these thoughts and ideas into one tone of sweetness, not the voice of regret, but of patient resignation, ap-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. H. P. Chandler's recollections. When Longfellow revisited Brunswick in 1875, he was the guest of the only surviving daughter of Professor Cleaveland. Soon after his return to Cambridge, he sent her the beautiful poem beginning, —

"Among the many lives that I have known," etc.,

which I have reproduced entire in an earlier chapter. In the entrance-hall to the Cleaveland Cabinet at Bowdoin, this poem in manuscript is framed with a portrait of Professor Cleaveland.

pealing as it ever must to the sympathies of the human heart.

In 1832 was published a "*Syllabus de la Grammaire italienne*. Par H. W. Longfellow, professeur de langues modernes à Bowdoin-College." The preface to the work, written by Professor Longfellow, is somewhat curious, and reads as follows:—

"J'ai préparé cet *Abrégé de la Grammaire italienne*, non pour instruire ceux qui auraient à parler cette langue, mais pour faciliter les progrès de ceux, qui voudront l'apprendre à lire. Leur atteindre ce but, il suffit d'en avoir exposé succinctement les principes. Il serait superflu de les développer dans toute leur étendue.

"J'ai employé l'accent aigu sur presque tous les mots italiens, pour marquer les syllabes sur lesquelles il faut appuyer la voix dans la prononciation; mais il faut observer que les Italiens ne s'en servent que très rarement. On trouvera les règles pour l'usage de l'accent aigu dans le traité de l'orthographe; voyez Chapitre VIII., p. 104."<sup>1</sup>

The work is exceedingly elementary, though the forms and principles of the language are stated

<sup>1</sup> Full title: *Syllabus de la Grammaire italienne*. Par H. W. Longfellow, professeur de langues modernes à Bowdoin-College. À l'usage de ceux qui possèdent la langue française. Boston: Gray et Bowen, mcccxxxii. [12 mo. pp. 102.]

To the same year belong the following, both of them prepared by Professor Longfellow:—

1. *Cours de Langue Française*. [Boston: 1832.]
  1. *Le Ministre de Wakefield*.
  2. *Proverbes Dramatiques*.
2. *Saggi de' Novellieri Italiani d'ogni Secolo: tratti da' piu celebri Scrittori, con brevi Notizie intorno alla Vita di ciascheduno*. [Boston: 1832.]



clearly and succinctly. To such persons as already possessed a reading familiarity with the French tongue, the book must have proved serviceable. The plan of the work is excellent; and the wonder is, that the same plan has not been carried out more extensively at the present time. Such a book for English-speaking students serves a double purpose,—it keeps fresh the knowledge of one language while teaching the elements of another. The method is certainly plausible and advantageous.

In 1832, in the January number of "The North American Review," Professor Longfellow published another article, covering thirty-two pages, choosing, as his theme, "The Defence of Poetry." The article was suggested by the republication of Sir Philip Sidney's "The Defence of Poesie,"<sup>1</sup> and was not so much a critical review of that work as a chapter of fresh and original thoughts on the state of English poetry in general. As might be expected, the writer expresses himself earnestly and forcibly. "We hope," he exclaims, "that Sir Philip Sidney's 'Defence' will be widely read and long remembered! Oh that in our country it might be the harbinger of as bright an intellectual day as it was in his own! With us the spirit of the age is clamorous for utility,—for visible, tangible utility,—for bare, brawny, muscular utility. We would be roused to action by the voice of the populace and the sounds of the crowded mart, and not 'lulled asleep in shady idleness with poet's pastimes.' We are swallowed up

<sup>1</sup> Republished in the Library of the Old English Prose Writers, as Vol. II. Cambridge: Hilliard and Brown. 1831.

in schemes for gain, and engrossed with contrivances for bodily enjoyments, as if this particle of dust were immortal,—as if the soul needed no aliment, and the mind no raiment.”

In the course of this very instructive and highly interesting article, so interesting, in fact, that one could wish it might be reprinted in a form more accessible to the general reader, occurs the following:—

“We wish our native poets would give a more national character to their writings. In order to effect this, they have only to write more naturally, to write from their own feelings and impressions, from the influence of what they see around them, and not from any preconceived notions of what poetry ought to be, caught by reading many books, and imitating many models. This is peculiarly true in descriptions of natural scenery. In these let us have no more sky-larks and nightingales. For us they only warble in books. A painter might as well introduce an elephant or a rhinoceros into a New-England landscape. We would not restrict our poets in the choice of their subjects, or the scenes of their story; but when they sing under an American sky, and describe a native landscape, let the description be graphic, as if it had been seen and not imagined.”

The article concludes in the following manner:—

“We have set forth the portrait of modern poetry in rather gloomy colors; for we really think, that the greater part of what is published in this book-writing age, ought, in justice, to suffer the fate of

the children of Thetis, whose immortality was tried by fire. We hope, however, that, ere long, some one of our most gifted bards will throw his fetters off, and, relying on himself alone, fathom the recesses of his own mind, and bring up rich pearls from the secret depths of thought."

In the April number of "The Review," the same year, appeared Professor Longfellow's third contribution, entitled "Spanish Devotional and Moral Poetry." It covered nearly forty pages. The greater portion of the article was made up of original specimens, with translations of early Spanish poetry reaching from the thirteenth to the middle of the sixteenth century. This article was subsequently reprinted as an introduction to Longfellow's translation of "Coplas de Manrique."

The October number of "The Review," same year, contained an article on the "History of the Italian Language and Dialects," written by Professor Longfellow. It filled nearly sixty pages of the periodical, and, in its plan and scope, followed the model of the previous article on the French language. The author, however, treated his subject in a more exhaustive manner, and, I may add, with less interest to most readers. Were the editors of a magazine, not of a special character, to print such an article nowadays, it is to be feared that the journal would immediately forfeit its patronage. What was read and appreciated fifty years ago would hardly be looked at now, except by the very few whose tastes incline them to such themes. But I do not mean to assert that the article on the Italian language will not bear perusal.

The essay on the moral and devotional poetry of Spain first introduced to the public Longfellow's version of Don Jorge Manrique's sublime ode on the death of his father. Both essay and ode were republished in one volume in 1833.<sup>1</sup> "Professor Longfellow's version," says Mr. Prescott, "is well calculated to give the English reader a correct notion of the Castilian bard, and, of course, a very exaggerated one of the literary culture of the age."

"The North American Review" for April, 1833, contained an essay, covering nearly forty pages, on "Spanish Language and Literature." In this notice Professor Longfellow ably considers the three divisions of the old romance as spoken in Spain; namely, the Castilian, the Lemosin, and the Gallego, or Galician. Each of the dialects is sketched clearly, but concisely: the most striking features in its history are given, and numerous illustrations of its peculiarities are exhibited. The essay is not written for the professed scholar, but for intelligent readers generally.

The publication of Thoms's collection of early prose romances, in three volumes, London, 1828, suggested to Professor Longfellow the writing of an article on "Old English Romances." It was printed in "The North American Review" for October, 1833. The article is one of the most interesting of the author's contributions to periodical literature. The opening paragraph is here given:—

<sup>1</sup> Coplas de Don Jorge Manrique. Translated from the Spanish, with an introductory essay on the moral and devotional poetry of Spain. Boston: 1833.

"One of the most interesting and instructive walks of literature lies among the graves of the departed,—for the thoughts of man have their graves like man himself; and the reverend monitor, Time, for them likewise tolls the passing-bell, and performs the sad obsequies. A vast library is a vast cemetery of mind, where, in a certain sense, lie buried the ideas of those who have gone before us. Each dusty tome is a neglected monument, whose epitaph is written in the title-page, and whose date not unfrequently records at once the birth and the death of its tenant. There the poet and the philosopher literally mingle their dust together, and the musty apostle of an obsolete creed lies side by side with the prurient ballad-singer. The learned prelate is a prey to the worm, and the wanton tale-bearer lips his amorous conceits to the dull ear of oblivion. One might almost think that they had implored eternal peace, and that their pages' prayer had been answered; for no one disturbs their repose, save now and then some Old Mortality who comes to meditate among the tombs, and to wipe away the mildew and gossamer which cover the inscriptions."

The author then proceeds to comment more particularly on the romances of "Robert the Devil," "Thomas of Reading," "The Famous Historie of Fryer Bacon," "The History of Fryer Rush," "Virgilius," "The Noble Birth and Gallant Achievements of that Remarkable Outlaw Robin Hood," "The History of George A. Green," "Tom A. Lincolne," etc.

In the summer of 1835 appeared "Outre-Mer: a



Pilgrimage beyond the Sea," in two volumes.<sup>1</sup> Two years before, its publication had been begun in numbers, but not continued to any great length; and, as I have already shown, portions of the work had been printed in the pages of "The New-England Magazine" under another title. In the book-notices of the September number, 1833, of "The New-England Magazine," I find a very pleasant critique of the first part of "Outre-Mer," which closed with a reflective article on the cemetery of Père-la-Chaise. It says, —

"It seems hardly worth while to keep in the public journals a secret which is known by all the world; so we may as well say, that this little work is the production of Professor Longfellow of Bowdoin College, — a man of fine talents, an excellent scholar, and a poet withal. It is one of that sort of books which are the delight of readers and the despair of critics. Without any pretensions to being a great work, without claiming to be very profound or very original, it is full of taste, good feeling, and unaffected elegance. It is the book of a man who has a fine eye for the beautiful, a genial sympathy for humanity, rich powers of description, and a disposition to look on the bright side of things. He reminds us a good deal of Washington Irving — not that we mean to insinuate that he is an imitator: for if "The Sketch-Book" had never been written, we have no doubt "Outre-Mer" would have been what it is; but they resemble each other a good deal in the most striking characteristics of their minds. . . . The style is perfect: we could wish sometimes, that it had more of careless vigor and less of fin-

<sup>1</sup> Outre-Mer: a Pilgrimage beyond the Sea. In two volumes. New York. Published by Harper & Brothers, 1835. [12mo, pp. 226, 252.]

ished elegance. We hope Professor Longfellow will continue it : we shall be always glad to hear from him."

The reviewer prints several selections from "Outre-Mer," and writes as if totally ignorant of the fact that many of these quotations had previously appeared in the pages of the magazine under the heading of "The Schoolmaster." It may be that this innocence is purely intentional, but I very much doubt it.

In the October number, 1834, of "The North American Review," a writer thus speaks of the first two numbers of the serial publication : —

"This work is obviously the production of a writer of talent and of cultivated taste, who has chosen to give to the public the results of his observation in foreign countries in the form of a series of tales and sketches. It is a form, which, as every reader knows, has been recommended by the high example and success of Mr. Irving ; and, in recording only such circumstances as suit his fancy, an accomplished traveller is certainly more likely to preserve the proper measure of spirit and freshness, than when he enters on the task of preparing an elaborate and formal narrative. It must not be supposed, that, in adopting the form of Mr. Irving, the author has been guilty of any other imitation. They have both entered on the same field, in different directions, and without the least hazard of crossing each other's path ; and we are much inclined to wish that other writers, who possess the requisite leisure and accomplishments, would follow their example."

In the foregoing selection, the writer<sup>1</sup> feigns ignorance of the authorship of "Outre-Mer." Professor Longfellow had already contributed several important articles to the pages of "The North American Review," and was certainly not unknown in the literary circle of the periodical. Furthermore, it was now pretty well known in Boston, that he was the author of "Outre-Mer;" so that it is not easy to suppose that the critic's ignorance of the authorship was other than assumed on this special occasion.

When the complete work was published in New York, the editor of "The New-England Magazine" again noticed it. I quote from this notice, which appeared in the number for July, 1835.

"It is unnecessary to state to our readers that the author of these pleasing volumes is H. W. Longfellow, recently appointed professor of modern languages and *belles-lettres* in Harvard University, and now abroad for the purpose of gathering materials to illustrate the department of learning covered by his professorship. The writings of this gentleman show a rare union of the scholar and the poet. To a minute and laborious research, a well-arranged and copious fund of erudition, he adds a lively sense of the harmony of language, an artist-like power of delineation, and a ready humor, that peeps out ever and anon, and is always greeted with a hearty welcome."

Farther on, the reviewer says, —

"We think the readers of this work will welcome it as an agreeable and valuable addition to our literature. The

<sup>1</sup> Rev. O. W. B. Peabody.

style is pure and polished: the language flows with fullness, beauty, and harmony. Many of the humorous sketches are drawn with a true and discriminating hand; while the serious portions are written in a noble spirit, adorned by well-sustained eloquence. But there are some points of small importance in which the work is open to criticism. A few pet words and phrases have crept into our author's style, and established themselves without his knowing it, such as 'merry,' 'merrymake,' 'holiday-finery.' Mr. Longfellow writes, too, sometimes in the character of an idler, who goes about with his eyes half shut, indulging in all sorts of day-dreams and vagaries. Now, everybody knows that Mr. Longfellow is the most wide-awake of mortal men, that he never idled away an hour in his life, and that, instead of wandering listlessly over the storied scenes of Europe, he contrived to gather an astonishing amount of information on all matters pertaining to literature, down to the provincial dialects of the various languages, of which he made himself thoroughly master. We should have been better pleased had our author written more in his own character; though, it is true, he has Mr. Irving's authority for falling into reveries whenever the humor takes him. Mr. Longfellow has a way of picking up some odd, tatterdemalion ne'er-do-well, and making a picture of him. He does this with a good degree of skill and graphic power; nevertheless, people *will* be reminded of Mr. Irving again. But our author is no imitator; only these coincidences in manner, once in a while, bring up the author of 'The Sketch-Book' and 'Bracebridge Hall.' A very few changes would have removed these traces of resemblance; for they are *traces*, and nothing more. But this picking flaws in beautiful works of poetry and imagination is an ungracious task, and we gladly bid it adieu."

Of the work itself I need add but little to what has already been said in this chapter. It is, confessedly, not much more than a book of travels through France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and Holland; though the last two countries named are barely noticed. Around his descriptions of scenery, and of the various incidents which pleased his youthful fancy, the author throws a halo of imagination,—a sort of dreamy atmosphere which at times makes what is real seem quite the opposite. Poesy, art, romance, and life are beautifully intermingled; and the generous feeling and true philosophy evinced by the pilgrim of the Land beyond the Sea throw a mild, yet most attractive, coloring over all the objects encountered, and all the scenes passed through. Whether we walk with him through the valley of the Loire, take passage by night in the stage-coach from Paris to Bordeaux, or partake of the somewhat doubtful welcome of the inn of old Castile, we feel that we are in the company of a person of talent and of cultivated taste. “Outre-Mer” was Mr. Longfellow’s first venture in the field of *belles-lettres*: fortunately it was not the last. With all its excellence and grace, it will bear no comparison with “The Sketch-Book,” by which it is overshadowed; and, though it might have proved creditable to him, yet it could never have made a reputation for its author. The work possesses more than ordinary merit, however, and will amply repay perusal.



## CHAPTER VII.

## INVITED TO CAMBRIDGE: REVISITS EUROPE.

*(1835, 1836.)*

IN the month of December, 1834, Professor Longfellow received a letter from the corporation of Harvard College, informing him that George Ticknor had expressed a wish to retire from the professorship of modern languages and literature, and that the position was open to him, if he should choose to accept it. The offer was accompanied with permission to spend a year or more abroad, if it should be deemed necessary.

Longfellow was very much astounded at receiving such a proposal; and, at first, he was prompted to decline it. The department which he had established at Bowdoin College was now beginning to show results; the renown of the teacher was attracting students from all parts of New England; and the Board of Management was more than satisfied with what had already been accomplished, and was hopeful of the future. It was a sad moment when Professor Longfellow made known the call which he had received, and a still sadder one when he signified his determination to accept it.

During his stay in Brunswick, Longfellow had

formed many friendships; and the thought of breaking away from these troubled him sorely. He had also been made a member of the Maine Historical Society, and in 1834 was holding the office of librarian and cabinet-keeper. His work at the college was prospering, there was a perfect unanimity and harmony of feeling on all sides, and his domestic life was fraught with unalloyed happiness. But he concluded to make a change of scene, to choose a new field of labor. Who will say that it was not for the best?

There was living, at this time, in Portland, an intimate friend of Professor Longfellow's father, and an able exponent of the law of admiralty, — Mr. Charles S. Daveis. It may here be noted that he was also a friend of Sumner's father, and later of the great senator himself. To him, on the 5th of January, 1835, George Ticknor addressed the following interesting letter, which affords a clear notion of the duties and responsibilities of a Cambridge professorship.

“MY DEAR CHARLES, — Besides wishing you a Happy New-Year, I have a word to say about myself. I have substantially resigned my place at Cambridge, and Longfellow is substantially appointed to fill it. I say substantially, because he is to pass a year or more in Germany, and the North of Europe; and I am to continue in the place till he returns, which will be in a year from next Commencement or thereabouts. This is an arrangement I have had at heart a good while, but could not well accomplish earlier, partly because my department, being a new one, was not brought, until lately, into a good condition to leave; and partly because I was unwilling to

seem to give up the college during the troubles of the late Rebellion.

“I have been an active professor these fifteen years; and for thirteen years of the time I have been contending, against a constant opposition, to procure certain changes which should make the large means of the college more effectual for the education of the community. In my own department I have succeeded entirely, but I can get these changes carried no farther. As long as I hoped to advance them, I continued attached to the college; when I gave up all hope, I determined to resign.

“The fact that I am to be free in a year makes me so already in spirit, and I look back upon my past course at the college almost entirely as matter of history. There is a good deal in it that gratifies me. During the fifteen years of my connection with it, as a teacher, more than half the instruction I have given has been voluntary, neither required nor contemplated by my statutes. When the finances of the college became embarrassed seven years ago, I volunteered the resignation of four hundred dollars out of the stipulated salary of one thousand dollars, and have never received but six hundred dollars since. During the nine years a department of the modern languages has existed, with four foreigners for teachers, who are generally more likely to have difficulties with the students than natives, no case whatsoever has been carried before the faculty; and during the whole fifteen years I have never myself been absent from an exercise, or tardy at one. Moreover, within the limits of the department, I have entirely broken

up the division of classes, established fully the principle and practice of progress according to proficiency, and introduced a system of voluntary study, which for several years has embraced from one hundred and forty to one hundred and sixty students; so that we have relied hardly at all on college discipline, as it is called, but almost entirely on the good disposition of the young men, and their desire to learn. If, therefore, the department of the modern languages is right, the rest of the college is wrong; and, if the rest of the college is right, we ought to adopt its system, which I believe no person whatsoever has thought desirable for the last three or four years. . . .

“In my whole connection with it, I feel as if I had been as much actuated by a sense of duty to improve the institution, and serve the community, as men in public places commonly are. So, I doubt not, are those who have the management of the college, and pursue the opposite course. I do not know that it could be in the hands of abler men, or men more disinterested; certainly not of men for whom I have a greater regard or respect. We differ, however, very largely, both as to what the college can be and what it ought to be. We therefore separate as men who go different roads, though proposing the same end, each persuaded the one he prefers is the best, the pleasantest, and the shortest.”<sup>1</sup>

“It was at the suggestion of Professor Ticknor that Longfellow received the invitation to come to Cambridge. In casting his eyes about him in search of a successor, the former had been attracted towards

<sup>1</sup> Life, Letters, and Journals of George Ticknor. Vol. i. p. 399.

the promising incumbent at Bowdoin College by the able articles on the study of languages which the latter had contributed to the pages of "The North American Review." Nothing of the sort had hitherto graced American literature; for the reason, perhaps, that there was no one to write them. The study of the languages and literatures of Greece and Rome at that time was accounted of paramount value; while that of the modern languages and literatures was adjudged to be more a means of amusing one's self, or a sort of accomplishment, rather than any absolute necessity. Indeed, perhaps I do not overstate the matter by saying that modern European nations, outside of England, were not generally supposed to have any literatures worthy of study. Longfellow never did a better service to his countrymen than when he ventured to write and to publish, in the ablest but most conservative of American periodicals, his scholarly and suggestive papers on the languages of Germany, Spain, France, and Italy: by so doing he scattered seed, that, falling into good ground, was destined to bear abundant fruits. His articles not only stimulated further investigation and study, and led to the organization of departments of the modern languages in other educational institutions, but they also proved to be the means of establishing him in a new field of work, of associating him with the oldest and best of American colleges, which, while reflecting honor upon himself, was alike honored by his renowned presence.

Illness in the family of Professor Ticknor compelled the latter to give up his position much sooner than



he anticipated. Instead of occupying the chair until the return of his successor from Europe, he resigned it in May, 1835. In November, 1836, Longfellow was formally appointed "Smith professor of the French and Spanish languages and literature, and professor of *belles-lettres*."

Before his departure for Europe, in the spring of 1835, Longfellow arranged with Harper and Brothers of New-York City for the publication of his "Outre-Mer" in book-form. In consideration of the payment of five hundred dollars, he transferred all his rights and title in the work to his publishers. During his absence from the country, the work was issued in two volumes, as I have already stated in the previous chapter.

Longfellow's object in revisiting Europe was study, and not pleasure. To thoroughly prepare himself for his new station was his highest ambition. His young wife went with him, however; and, for a few months at least, she was the companion of his earnest toil.

He went first to England, where he spent some time in a survey of the country. Early in the summer he repaired to Denmark and Sweden, and in the latter country he settled himself down for study. Some of the annotations in the collected edition of his poems, as well as one or two articles which he published in "The North American Review," attest to his diligence and research in the Scandinavian lands.

Late in the autumn he journeyed down into Holland, and intended to spend a few weeks at Rotter-

dam. But here a sad event took place, which has invested that old city with a sacredness which will never fade. In the bloom of her womanhood, Mrs. Longfellow died, on the 29th of November, 1835, from an illness contracted immediately after a confinement. Both mother and child vanished "as the dews of the early morning," leaving desolate a heart filled with many hopes. But the memory of the young wife is forever immortalized in the verse of her poet-husband; for in the "Footsteps of Angels" we may read, —

"When the hours of day are numbered,  
And the voices of the night  
Wake the better soul, that slumbered,  
To a holy, calm delight;

Ere the evening lamps are lighted,  
And, like phantoms grim and tall,  
Shadows from the fitful firelight  
Dance upon the parlor wall, —

Then the forms of the departed  
Enter at the open door:  
The beloved, the true-hearted,  
Come to visit me once more ;

. . . . .  
And with them the Being Beauteous,  
Who unto my youth was given,  
More than all things else to love me,  
And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep  
Comes that messenger divine,  
Takes the vacant chair beside me,  
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

.

And she sits and gazes at me  
With those deep and tender eyes,  
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,  
Looking downward from the skies.

Uttered not, yet comprehended,  
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,  
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,  
Breathing from her lips of air.

Oh, though oft depressed and lonely,  
All my fears are laid aside,  
If I but remember only  
Such as these have lived and died ! ”

After the death of this most lovely and inestimable woman, the bereaved husband went to Heidelberg, Germany, where he passed the winter of 1835-36. Here he became acquainted with Samuel Ward, a cousin of George W. Greene, whom Longfellow had met earlier at Marseilles. How the acquaintance was formed is best related in Mr. Ward's own words. He says, —

“In the summer of 1832, as I was discussing my plans for a trip to Europe in the autumn of that year, and a contemplated residence of several years abroad for purposes of study and instruction, my cousin, George Washington Greene of East Greenwich, late United-States consul at Rome, spoke to me with enthusiasm of the genius and promise of his friend Longfellow, then professor of modern languages and *belles-lettres* at Bowdoin College, Maine. Mr. Greene was himself a ripe and accomplished scholar, as shown by his various contributions to

historical literature, chief of which is the life of his distinguished grandfather, Gen. Nathanael Greene, Washington's 'man of action' during our Revolutionary war.

"When, therefore, after a residence of nearly four years abroad, I was invited by my amiable Jewish banker, the late Adolph Zimmern, to a quiet *conversazione* at his house on a certain evening in March, 1836, to meet Mrs. William Cullen Bryant and her daughter, and others of my countrymen, I was not a little surprised to find there Mr. Longfellow, the hero of the pen, not the sword, of my cousin's worship. I referred to Greene, whose name was a warm introduction to him; and when we left the house, early in the evening, it was to adjourn to my hotel, the 'Badischer Hof,' where we sat up in earnest converse until daylight. I had stopped for a day or two at Heidelberg to see a few old friends, on my way to America, after a winter spent partly in Berlin with Henry Wheaton, then our minister at the Court of Prussia, and partly in Dresden with George Ticknor. I was full of anecdotes of the home of Hegel and of Humboldt, and of the little Court of Saxony, where Prince John was completing his translation of Dante, and Baron Lindenau, though Chancellor of Saxony, was still intent upon his astronomical determination of the vagaries of the planet Venus. Ludwig Tieck used to read to us once a week the matchless translations of Shakspeare, for which the world is indebted to him, to august Wilhelm Schlegel, and—for that one of the plays, 'Romeo and Juliet'—to Tieck's daughter. We also went more than once to the

studio of Moritz Retzsch, the illustrator of 'Faust,' a stout, rosy-cheeked, short, enthusiastic artist, who looked for all the world the Saxon opposite of *Du Vinci*, or Raphael's classical features.

"Longfellow had led a secluded life since the death of his young wife in Holland the previous autumn. My budget of rattling talk was, therefore, a cheering and interesting peep into the social world from which his mourning had so long excluded him; and I also had glimpses to unfold of literary men and the artists and scientists of Paris, where I had spent two winters and a summer. The day following, I visited him at his rooms, which were strewn with books, in a house in the main street embracing a view of the castle. He was ready for another of my Sindbad narratives, and in later years more than once recalled, with a smile, the fact of my taking off my coat, as his room was warmed by a German stove, to talk more freely in my shirt-sleeves.

"With me it was a case of love at first sight, which has burned with the steady light of a Jewish tabernacle ever since. When, a day or two after, I started for the town of Tréves, he drove with me as far as Mannheim, where I bade him farewell. Our correspondence began when an accident detained me captive for a month at the residence of an old college-friend in the town and fortress of Luxemburg."

The spring and summer of 1836 were spent chiefly in Switzerland and the Tyrol. The impressions which these journeys left upon his mind are recorded in "Hyperion," where also we find the best itinerary of his several tours. It was in Switzerland that he



first met the lady who afterwards became his wife, and who, with her parents, was then making a grand tour on the Continent.

On the 14th of November of the same year, Longfellow arrived home ; and, on the 17th, Sumner thus wrote to his friend, Dr. Francis Lieber of New York : —

“Longfellow has returned home, having arrived only three days ago, full of pleasant reminiscences and of health. He tells me that he called upon Mittermaier, with a letter from you. He is a very pleasant fellow, and will at once assume the charge of Ticknor's department. . . . Longfellow left the Appletons in Switzerland.”

It may here be noted that Charles Sumner, who was at that time a young attorney trying his first cases at the Suffolk County Court, had casually met Longfellow, in Felton's room, in 1835, when Longfellow first came to Cambridge to consult with the college officials preparatory to his trip to Europe. The acquaintance between Sumner and Felton had begun as far back as 1831, when the former was a student at the law-school, and the latter was a Greek professor in the academic department of the college. But of this and other friendships I shall speak later on.

It was in the month of December, 1836, that the new Smith professor, having arrived and established himself in Cambridge, assumed the management of the department of modern languages and of *belles-lettres* at Harvard College.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## LONGFELLOW'S FIRST YEARS IN CAMBRIDGE.

(1836-1839.)

IN the year 1759, or thereabouts, Col. John Vassal erected an elegant and spacious mansion on a lot of land, comprising one hundred and fifty or more acres, lying on the outskirts of the then town of Cambridge, State of Massachusetts. Col. Vassal was a staunch loyalist; and his family was a distinguished one, both in Old and New England. He took an active part against the Whigs in the struggles preliminary to hostilities, and early in 1775 became a fugitive under the protection of the royal standard. His Cambridge and Boston estates were confiscated; and, in the dawn of the revolutionary strife, the former was occupied for a while by Gen. George Washington. Col. John Vassal retired to England, where he died in 1797, in consequence of eating, as it was said, a too hearty dinner.

As the royalists went out, the republicans came in; and the halls of the Tory now echoed to the tread of many feet. Col. John the first was succeeded by Col. John Glover and a battalion of his Marblehead regiment. It is safe to affirm that the man of Marblehead has left a more enduring record

than the marble of the Vassal. Glover served in the American army in the campaign against Burgoyne. He commanded the troops drawn up to receive the surrender of the latter, and, with Whipple, escorted the forces of the convention to Cambridge. Before long, however, the Provincial Congress ordered the grand and sumptuous mansion cleared and made ready for a more illustrious tenant; and in July, 1776, Glover and his sturdy men of Essex vacated, and went quietly into camp.

It was while the haymakers were busy at their work in the royalists' meadows that Washington drove into Cambridge, and was lodged in the former abode of Col. Vassal; and there he remained for the space of eight months ensuing.

“Once, ah! once, within these walls,  
One whom memory oft recalls,  
The Father of his Country dwelt;  
And yonder meadows broad and damp,  
The fires of the besieging camp  
Encircled with a burning belt.”

The commander-in-chief, on taking possession of the house, chose the south-east chamber for his sleeping apartment. The large room directly underneath this chamber he appropriated for his private study and official headquarters, and the room immediately in the rear was allotted to the military members of his family. “In the study,” writes Mr. Drake,<sup>1</sup> “the ample autograph was appended to letters and orders that have formed the framework of contemporary

<sup>1</sup> Old Landmarks and Historic Fields of Middlesex, by S. A. Drake.

history; the march of Arnold to Quebec, the new organization of the Continental army, the occupation of Dorchester Heights, and the simple but graphic expression of the final triumph of patient endurance in the following order of the day:—

HEADQUARTERS, 17th March, 1776.

Parole, Boston. Countersign, St. Patrick.

The regiments under marching orders to march tomorrow morning. Brigadier of the day, Gen. Sullivan.

By HIS EXCELLENCY'S COMMAND."

In this study probably assembled the councils of war; and around the board sat Ward, Putnam, and Lee in the places of honor; and Thomas, Heath, Greene, Sullivan, Spencer, and Knox in the order of rank.

Opposite the study, and just across the broad hall, on the left as one enters, was the reception-room in which Mrs. Washington, who arrived in Cambridge at about the same time as the tidings of the capture of Montreal, received her guests. It is a matter of history that Mrs. Washington entered the house on the 11th December, 1775, in company with Mrs. Gates, John Custis and lady, and George Lewis.

In the rear of the reception-room was the dining-room, in which, from that day to this, have been gathered many of the most eminent military, civil, and literary characters of our country, nay, of many countries.

While a resident of this house, "the general breakfasted at seven o'clock in the summer, and at eight in the winter. He dined at two, and drank tea early



The Craigie House at Cambridge.





in the evening: supper he eschewed altogether. His breakfast was very frugal; and at this meal he drank tea, of which he was extremely fond. He dined well, but was not difficult to please in the choice of his viands. There were usually eight or ten large dishes of meat and pastry, with vegetables, followed by a second course of pastry. After the removal of the cloth, the ladies retired; and the gentlemen, as was then the fashion, partook of wine. Madeira, of which he drank a couple of glasses out of silver camp-cups, was the general's favorite wine. Washington sat long at table. An officer who dined with him says the repast occupied two hours, during which the general was toasting and conversing all the time. One of his aides was seated every day at the bottom of the table, near the general, to serve the company, and distribute the bottles."

Washington departed from the Vassal House early in the month of April, 1776. On the occasion of his third visit to Boston, in 1789, he again passed through Cambridge, and spent about an hour in his old headquarters.

The war of the Revolution came at last to an end; and the Vassal mansion became the property of Nathaniel Tracy, who has the credit of having fitted out the first private armed vessel that ever sailed from an American port. Mr. Tracy was patriotic, generous, and hospitable, and in his lordly home entertained many distinguished guests.

After Mr. Tracy came Thomas Russell, a merchant-prince of Boston, who, says a tradition, once ate a sandwich made of a hundred-dollar note and two

slices of bread. Following him, in March, 1791, Dr. Andrew Craigie, formerly apothecary-general to the Continental army, in which service he amassed a fortune, came into possession of the mansion. For the house and land, together with the adjoining house of Frederick Geyer, since familiarly known as the Batchelder estate, Dr. Craigie gave £3,750 lawful money. He entertained two very notable personages in the house: one was Talleyrand, the evil genius of Napoleon; the other was the Duke of Kent, the father of Queen Victoria.

Edward Everett resided in the house just after his marriage, and while still a professor in the university of which he became president. Willard Phillips, and Worcester the lexicographer, also lived in the house which I am now considering.

In October, 1832, Mr. Jared Sparks, subsequently president of Harvard University, married Miss Frances Anne Allen of New York; and, in the month of April of the following year, he began housekeeping in the Craigie mansion. At this period of his life he was engaged on his "Writings of George Washington." In his journal, under date of April 2, appears the following entry:—

"This day began to occupy Mrs. Craigie's house in Cambridge. It is a singular circumstance, that while I am engaged in preparing for the press the letters of Gen. Washington which he wrote at Cambridge, after taking command of the American army, I should occupy the same rooms that he did at that time."

Dr. Craigie was ruined by his extravagant mode

of living. The expenses which it entailed were more than he could meet; and, ere long, dire necessity forced him to part with all save eight of the two hundred acres originally included in the estate. After his death Mrs. Craigie was compelled, likewise by necessity, to let lodgings to the youth of Harvard, or to whomsoever might apply for them; and thus it was that such intellectual giants whom I have named, and others not here mentioned, became occupants of the house.<sup>1</sup>

I must now relate how it was that Professor Longfellow came to live in this grand old mansion. The story has often been told, and is probably familiar to most readers; but the purpose of this work compels me to go over it again. I will do so in the words of the original narrator, Mr. George William Curtis.

In the summer of 1837 a young man passed down

<sup>1</sup> Some singular stories are told of this old, reduced gentlewoman. "On one occasion," says one writer, "her young poet-lodger, entering her parlor in the morning, found her sitting by the open window, through which innumerable canker-worms had crawled from the trees that they were devouring outside. They had fastened themselves to her dress, and hung in little writhing festoons from the white turban on her head. Her visitor, surprised and shocked, asked if she would do nothing to destroy the worms. Raising her eyes from her book, — she sat calmly reading, like indifference on a monument, — she said, in tones of solemn rebuke, 'Young man, have not our fellow-worms as good a right to live as we?' — an answer which throws uncle Toby's 'Go, little fly!' quite into the shade.

"As this grim old lady lay a-dying, she sent for the lodger to bid him farewell. He approached the bedside, and looked silently upon the spectral figure, the withered face, the gray hair. Suddenly drawing the bed-clothes around her, she opened her keen, sunken eyes, bright one moment before dimming with death, and uttered this strange greeting and farewell: 'Young man, never marry; for see how ugly an old woman looks in bed!'"

the elm-shaded walk that separated the old Craigie House from the high road. Reaching the door, he paused to observe the huge old-fashioned brass knocker and the quaint handle, relics, evidently, of an epoch of colonial state. To his mind, however, the house, and these signs of its age, were not interesting from the romance of antiquity alone, but from their association with the early days of our Revolution, when Gen. Washington, after the battle of Bunker Hill, had his headquarters in the mansion. Had his hand, perhaps, lifted this same latch, lingering, as he pressed it, in the whirl of a myriad emotions? Had he, too, paused in the calm summer afternoon, and watched the silver gleam of the broad river in the meadows, the dreamy blue of the Milton hills beyond? And had the tranquillity of that landscape penetrated his heart with "the sleep that is among the hills," and whose fairest dream to him was a hope now realized in the peaceful prosperity of his country?

When the brazen clang of the huge knocker had ceased resounding, the great door slowly opened; and no phantom serving-man, but a veritable flesh-and-blood retainer of the hostess of the mansion, invited the visitor to enter. He inquired for Mrs. Craigie. In answer, the door of a little parlor was thrown open; and the young man beheld a tall, erect figure, majestically crowned with a turban, beneath which burned a pair of keen gray eyes. A commanding gravity of deportment, harmonious with the gentlewoman's age, and with the ancestral respectability of the mansion, assured profound respect; while, at



a glance, it was clear to see, that combination of reduced dignity condescending to a lower estate, and that pride of essential superiority to circumstances, which is traditional among women in the situation of the turbaned lady. There was kindness mellowing the severity of her visitor's inquiry if there was a room vacant in the house.

"I lodge students no longer," she responded gravely, possibly not without regret, as she contemplated the applicant, that she had vowed so stern a resolution.

"But I am not a student," answered the stranger. "I am a professor in the university."

"A professor?" said she inquiringly, as if her mind failed to conceive a professor without a clerical sobriety of apparel, a white cravat, or at least spectacles.

"Professor Longfellow," continued the guest, introducing himself.

"Ah! that is different," said the old lady, her features slightly relaxing, as if professors were, *ex officio*, innocuous, and she need no longer barricade herself behind a stern gravity of demeanor. "I will show you what there is."

Thereupon she preceded the professor up the stairs, and, gaining the upper hall, paused at each door, opened it, permitted him to perceive its delightful fitness for his purpose, kindled expectation to the utmost, then quietly closed the door again, observing, "You cannot have that." It was most Barmecide hospitality. The professorial eyes glanced restlessly around the fine old-fashioned points of the mansion,

marked the wooden carvings, the air of opulent respectability in the past, which corresponds in New England to the impression of ancient nobility in Old England, and wondered in which of these pleasant fields of suggestive association he was to be allowed to pitch his tent. The turbaned hostess at length opened the door of the south-east-corner room in the second story; and while the guest looked wistfully in, and awaited the customary "You cannot have that," he was agreeably surprised by a variation of the strain, to the effect that he might occupy it.

The room was upon the front of the house, and looked over the meadows to the river. It had an atmosphere of fascinating repose, in which the young man was at once domesticated, as in an old home. The elms of the avenue shaded its windows; and, as he glanced from them, the summer lay asleep upon the landscape in the windless day.

"This," said the old lady, with a slight sadness in her voice, as if speaking of times forever past, and to which she herself properly belonged, "this was Gen. Washington's chamber."

The stately hostess retired, and the next day the new lodger took possession of his room.

Professor Longfellow's first literary production, after he had settled in Cambridge, was an article entitled "The Great Metropolis," a review of a work treating of life in London.<sup>1</sup> The article was printed in "The North American Review" for April, 1837.

<sup>1</sup> The Great Metropolis. By the author of *Random Recollections of the Lords and Commons*. 2 vols. 12mo. New York: Saunders and Otley. 1837.

The most that can be said of it is, that it is pleasantly written, and is, in spirit, very much against the book. "In reading the book," says the reviewer, "you feel that you are walking through London with a man who wears a shocking bad hat: and when your walk is at an end, though you cannot but thank him for the information he has given you, nevertheless you commend him in future to the raising of cucumbers or the digging of fish-ponds; for you see that he is 'of the earth, earthy.'"

In the early part of the year 1837, a strong and lasting friendship was formed between Henry W. Longfellow, aged thirty, Cornelius C. Felton, aged twenty-nine, George S. Hillard and Henry R. Cleveland, each aged twenty-eight, and Charles Sumner, aged twenty-six. They called themselves the "Five of Clubs." Felton was at this time the professor of Greek in Harvard College; Cleveland was a teacher by profession, and an able scholar withal; Hillard and Sumner were partners in the practice of the law. Longfellow had been introduced to Felton by his old schoolmate, John Owen, two years before, and in Felton's room had first met Sumner. Never were five ambitious souls brought together in more congenial harmony. On Saturday afternoons they usually came together. We are told that "they met simply as friends with common tastes and the fullest sympathy with each other, talking of society, the week's experiences, new books, their individual studies, plans, and hopes, and of Europe, — which Longfellow and Cleveland had seen, and which the others longed to see. They loved good cheer, but observed

moderation in their festivities. A table simply spread became a symposium when Felton, with his joyous nature, took his seat among his friends; and the other four were not less genial and hearty. There was hardly a field of literature which one or the other had not traversed, and they took a constant interest in each other's studies. Each sought the criticism of the rest upon his own book, essay, or poem before it was given to the public. Their mutual confidence seemed to know no limitation of distrust or fear of possible alienation; and they revealed, as friends do not often reveal, their inner life to each other. Rarely in history has there been a fellowship so beautiful as that of these gifted young men."<sup>1</sup>

For a time the meetings were held at Longfellow's room in the old Craigie House; sometimes at Felton's; and, not often, at No. 4 Court Street, Boston,—the law-office of Sumner and Hillard. Occasionally the friends would adjourn their meetings in order to pay a visit at the home of Professor Andrews Norton,—whose heart was as large as his scholarship,—the father of Professor Charles Eliot Norton.

During Sumner's absence in Europe, the Five of Clubs was limited to four members; but the re-unions were still kept up, and the absent one was often discussed and never forgotten at the genial board. When he arrived home, he found that several changes had taken place. Cleveland had taken unto himself a wife, and was now living at "Pine

<sup>1</sup> Pierce's *Memoirs and Letters of Charles Sumner*. Vol. i. p. 161.

Bank," near Jamaica Pond; Felton was also married, and living in the new house which he had built in Cambridge. This was in the early part of the year 1840. Although increasing family-cares now began to break in upon the meetings, they in no way lessened the bonds of friendship. On Saturday afternoons Sumner was always to be found at the Craigie House, and not unfrequently Felton would join the two intimates at the dinner-hour. Between Sumner and Longfellow there was never any diffidence and reserve; as they were when they first met, so they remained for thirty-seven years.

Let us now turn our attention for a while to that warm friendship which sprung up about this time between Longfellow and his old classmate Nathaniel Hawthorne. Ever since his graduation in 1825, Hawthorne had been leading the life of a recluse at Salem, Mass., verily sitting in his little room under the eaves, reading, studying, meditating, and "feeling his way through the twilight of dreams, into the dusky chambers of that house of thought whose haunted interior none but himself ever visited." But rarely did he have any communication with the members of his family; but rarely did he forsake the upper chamber in the old Herbert-street mansion; but rarely did he walk into that pew in the First Church, which his family had held since 1640. To the external world he was as if he were dead: and yet, during all these years, he was never idle; for his brain was weaving those ethereal fancies, which, printed first in several of the periodicals of the day, subsequently re-appeared in a collective



form as the "Twice-told Tales."<sup>1</sup> On March 7, 1837, Hawthorne wrote the following missive to Longfellow: —

"The agent of the American Stationers' Company will send you a copy of a book entitled 'Twice-told Tales,' of which, as a classmate, I venture to request your acceptance. We were not, it is true, so well acquainted at college that I can plead an absolute right to inflict my 'Twice-told' tediousness upon you; but I have often regretted that we were not better known to each other, and have been glad of your success in literature and in more important matters. . . . I should like to flatter myself that they would repay you some part of the pleasure which I have derived from your own 'Outre-Mer.'"

Longfellow replied cordially to this letter, and assured Hawthorne that he had often been in his remembrance. The latter again wrote, in June, —

"Since we last met, which you remember was in Sawtelle's room, where you read a farewell poem to the relics of the class, — ever since that time I have secluded myself from society; and yet I never meant any such thing, nor dreamed what sort of life I was going to lead. I have made a captive of myself, and put me into a dungeon, and now I cannot find the key to let myself out; and, if the door were open, I should be almost afraid to come out. You tell me that you have met with troubles and changes. I

<sup>1</sup> Twice-told Tales. By Nathaniel Hawthorne. Boston: American Stationers' Company. 1837. 12mo, pp. 334. The pecuniary risk was assumed by Horatio Bridge, and not till long afterward did Hawthorne know of his friend's generous interposition.

know not what these may have been, but I can assure you that trouble is the next best thing to enjoyment, and that there is no fate in this world so horrible as to have no share in either its joys or sorrows. For the last ten years I have not lived, but only dreamed of living. It may be true that there have been some unsubstantial pleasures here in the shade, which I might have missed in the sunshine; but you cannot conceive how utterly devoid of satisfaction all my retrospects are. I have laid up no treasure of pleasant remembrances against old age, but there is some comfort in thinking that future years can hardly fail to be more varied and therefore more tolerable than the past."

Longfellow recognized his old classmate in a way more substantial than by merely answering letters. In the July number of "The North American Review," 1837, he published an appreciative review of the "Twice-told Tales:" —

"When a new star rises in the heavens," he begins by saying, "people gaze after it for a season with the naked eye, and with such telescopes as they may find. In the stream of thought, which flows so peacefully deep and clear, through the pages of this book, we see the bright reflection of a spiritual star, after which men will be fain to gaze 'with the naked eye and with the spy-glasses of criticism.' This star is but newly risen; and ere long the observations of numerous star-gazers, perched upon arm-chairs and editors' tables, will inform the world of its magnitude and its place in the heaven of poetry, whether it be in the paw of the Great Bear, or on the fore-

head of Pegasus, or on the strings of the lyre, or in the wing of the eagle. Our own observations are as follows :—

“To this little work we would say, ‘Live ever, sweet, sweet book.’ It comes from the hand of a man of genius. Every thing about it has the freshness of morning and of May. These flowers and green leaves of poetry have not the dust of the highway upon them. They have been gathered fresh from the secret places of a peaceful and gentle heart. There flow deep waters, silent, calm, and cool; and the green trees look into them, and ‘God’s blue heaven.’ The book, though in prose, is written nevertheless by a poet. He looks upon all things in the spirit of love, and with lively sympathies; for to him external form is but the representation of internal being, all things having a life, an end, and aim.”

The article is interspersed with numerous citations and extracts from the book, and concludes as follows :—

“These extracts are sufficient to show the beautiful and simple style of the book before us, its vein of pleasant philosophy, and the quiet humor, which is to the face of a book what a smile is to the face of man. In speaking in terms of such high praise as we have done, we have given utterance, not alone to our own feelings, but, we trust, to those of all gentle readers of the ‘Twice-told Tales.’ Like children we say, ‘Tell us more.’”

Hawthorne received the quarterly, and read the review with no ordinary interest. In his note of

thanks, dated June 19, he says, "I frankly own that I was not without hopes that you would do this kind office for the book; though I could not have anticipated how very kindly it would be done. Whether or no the public will agree to the praise which you bestow on me, there are at least five persons who think you the most sagacious critic on earth; viz., my mother and two sisters, my old maiden aunt, and finally, the strongest believer of the whole five, my own self."

Unfortunately the enthusiasm of Longfellow did not much increase the demand for the book. Some six or seven hundred copies were disposed of, to be sure, but not enough to bring gladness to the heart of its author. But it initiated a very strong and earnest friendship between the poet and the romancer. Thenceforth there existed no barriers between them: they courted and loved each other's society. Into the quiet chamber of the Salem recluse came often a welcome guest, none other than the author of the "Psalm of Life;" and now and then the visits were returned. But why seek to penetrate the secrecy and the charm which overshadow them?

In the July number of the quarterly, 1837, appeared an able article entitled "Tegnér's Frithiofs Saga." It was prepared by Professor Longfellow while he was sojourning in Europe, and was sent to the editors of "The Review" in the autumn of 1836. It was placed on file, to await the return home of its author; as it was not thought wise to issue it before it should have had the advantage of his own personal correction of the proof-sheets. Other cir-

cumstances delayed its publication till the date named above.

The essay opens with a slight biographical sketch of Esaias Tegnér, and is followed by pleasant pictures of home-life in Sweden. Then comes the story of the poem, interspersed with frequent translations from the original. The substance of this article was afterwards reprinted in the "Poets and Poetry of Europe," and in the poet's collected works are several of the versions. Notable among the latter are the cantos entitled "Frithiof's Courtship," and "Frithiof's Temptation." Tegnér's poem is written in the singular measure of the iambic trimeter, which, in the article, Longfellow declares to be "solemn-sounding, but to English ears unmusical and lame."<sup>1</sup>

During the summer of 1838, Professor Longfellow prepared and published in the July number of "The North American Review" a critical essay entitled "Anglo-Saxon Literature," based on the recently published works of Thorpe, Conybeare, and Kemble. To scholars the paper ought to prove interesting and perhaps valuable.

<sup>1</sup> As a specimen, here is the first stanza of the canto entitled Frithiof's Temptation:—

"Vären kommer, faglen qvittvar, skogen löfvas, solen ler,  
Och de lösta floder dansa sjungande mot hafvet ner:  
Glödande som Frejas kinder tittar rosen ur sin knopp,  
Och i menskans hjerta vakna lefnadslust och mod och hopp."

Which Longfellow translates, —

"Spring is coming, birds are twittering, forests leaf, and smiles the sun;  
And the loosened torrents downward singing to the ocean run:  
Glowing like the cheek of Freya, peeping rosebuds 'gin to ope,  
And in human hearts awaken love of life, and joy, and hope."



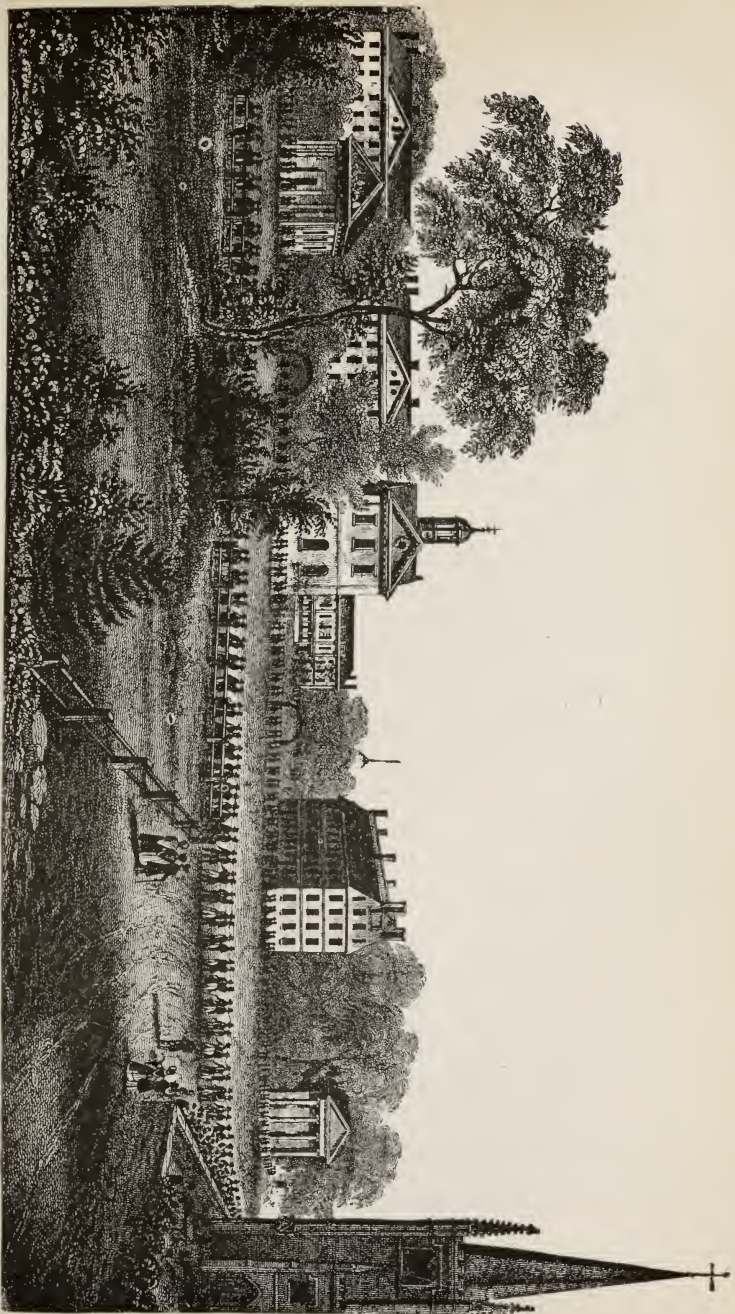
We will now take a brief survey of the condition of Harvard University at the time when Longfellow entered upon his new field of labor. In September, 1836, two months before the professor formally received his appointment, the second centennial anniversary of the foundation of the college was celebrated with great *eclat*. A pavilion was erected on the college-grounds, where the alumni assembled, answering to the roll-call of graduates. An old man of eighty-six, of the class of 1774, was the first to answer. The address was delivered by President Quincy. Odes were recited, speeches were made by Edward Everett and Joseph Story and other magnates of the institution. Everett presided; and Robert C. Winthrop, a direct descendant of the first governor of the Massachusetts Colony, one of the earliest supporters of the college, was the marshal of the day. The college buildings were illuminated in the evening. The outward appearance of the institution is well shown by the accompanying illustration.

At the time when Professor Longfellow began his work in the college, Josiah Quincy, LL.D., a graduate of 1790, for eight years a member of the National Congress, and for five years one of the best mayors that the city of Boston ever had, was the president of the university. He had been chosen in 1829 as the worthy successor of John Thornton Kirkland. Associated with him in the college faculty were the Hon. Joseph Story, LL.D., who, in 1811, was appointed, by President Madison, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and since June, 1829, had been the Dane professor of law in

the university ; Simon Greenleaf, LL.D., since 1833 the successor of Ashmun as the Royall professor of law ; Edward Tyrrel Channing, LL.D., brother of William Ellery Channing, D.D., and of Walter Channing, M.D., since 1819 the Boylston professor of rhetoric and oratory in the college, "where the exactness of his instruction, his cultivated taste, and his highly disciplined mental powers, gave him an eminent reputation with his pupils;" Daniel Treadwell, the Rumford professor of the physical and mathematical sciences as applied to the useful arts ; John Ware, M.D., the Hersey professor of physics ; Cornelius Conway Felton, the Eliot professor of Greek literature, and subsequently president of the college ; Benjamin Peirce, LL.D., the Perkins professor of astronomy and mathematics since 1842.

In the department of modern languages at this time, to which, as I have previously remarked, great attention was being paid, Francis Sales was the instructor in French and Spanish from 1816 to 1839, and in Spanish alone until 1854, the year of his death. To him belongs the honor of having done more than any other one man of his time to spread the love of Spanish literature in the United States, and of having been the first instructor in Spanish of George Ticknor, the distinguished author of the history of Spanish literature. Pietro Bachi, A.M., J.U.D., was an instructor in Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese ; Francis M. J. Surault was the instructor in French ; and Hermann Bokum was the instructor in German.

It will thus be seen that the difficulties which surrounded Professor Longfellow at the time when he



Harvard College at the Time of the Second Centennial in 1836.

began his labors at Bowdoin College were entirely wanting at Harvard. In the latter institution, the department of modern languages had already been created, and for many years had been in active progress. All that remained for the new professor was, to simply continue, and, if possible, advance to higher accomplishments, the working of this department. He undertook the task thoroughly fortified and equipped, as we already know.

It is interesting in this connection to glance hurriedly at the educational standing of the college at this period. Harvard stood then, as it does to-day, foremost of American colleges. Its corps of teachers was wholly made up of eminent men; and their combined scholarship has never since, I fancy, been surpassed, if indeed equalled. The reputation of these instructors attracted young men from all sections of the continent, just as at the present time the reputation of the college itself draws them to its halls of prestige. In 1836 there were two hundred and nineteen students in the under-graduate department alone; and of these how many have made their names recognized throughout the country.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The requisites for the admission of a student to the college, in 1836, were as follows: the whole of Virgil and Cæsar, Cicero's Select Orations, Adam's Latin Grammar (Gould's edition), and the writing of Latin; Jacob's Greek Reader, the Four Gospels of the Greek Testament, the Gloucester Greek Grammar (Cambridge edition), and the writing of Greek; Lacroix's Arithmetic (Cambridge edition), Euler's Algebra, and the Elements of Geography, Ancient and Modern, by J. E. Worcester.

The annual expenses, including instruction, library, lecture-rooms, steward's department, rent and care of room, amounted to ninety dollars. When a student entered college, his parents or guardian filed a statement with the patron (always some well-known



Professor Longfellow received his appointment in November, 1836; and before the opening of the new year he had begun to busy himself with its duties. From this time until 1854, — eighteen years, — he retained his professorship, and was then succeeded by his brother poet, James Russell Lowell.

I know not how better to characterize his work in the college than by printing a letter written by Edward Everett Hale, D.D., under date of Feb. 5, 1881. He says, —

“I was so fortunate as to be in the first ‘section,’ which Mr. Longfellow instructed personally when he came to Cambridge in 1836. Perhaps I best illustrate the method of his instruction, when I say that I think every man in that section would now say that he was on intimate terms with Mr. Longfellow. We are all near sixty now; but I think that every one of the section would expect to have Mr. Longfellow recognize him, and would enter into familiar talk with him, if they met. From the first, he chose to take with us the relation of a personal friend a few years older than we were.

“As it happened, the regular recitation-rooms of the college were all in use; and, indeed, I think he was hardly expected to teach any language at all.

citizen of Cambridge not officially connected with the college) of the amount of money the student was to be annually allowed for his incidental and outside contingencies: and, whenever a student wanted money for any purpose, he was obliged to apply to the patron for the desired amount; it being optional with the latter to either grant it or to refuse. It was against a law of the college for any student to incur a debt without having previously asked permission of the patron.

Commencement was held on the last Wednesday in August.



He was to oversee the department, and to lecture. But he seemed to teach us German for the love of it. I know I thought he did; and, till now, it has never occurred to me to ask whether it were a part of his regular duty. Anyway, we did not meet him in one of the rather dingy 'recitation-rooms,' but in a sort of parlor, carpeted, hung with pictures, and otherwise handsomely furnished, which was, I believe, called 'the corporation-room.' We sat round a mahogany table, which was reported to be meant for the dinners of the trustees; and the whole affair had the aspect of a friendly gathering in a private house, in which the study of German was the amusement of the occasion. These accidental surroundings of the place characterize well enough the whole proceeding.

"He began with familiar ballads, read them to us, and made us read them to him. Of course we soon committed them to memory without meaning to, and I think this was probably part of his theory. At the same time we were learning the paradigms by rote. But we never studied the grammar, except to learn them; nor do I know to this hour what are the contents of half the pages in the regular German grammars.

"This was quite too good to last. For his regular duty was the oversight of five or more instructors who were teaching French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese to two or three hundred under-graduates. All these gentlemen were of European birth, and you know how under-graduates are apt to fare with such men. Mr. Longfellow had a real administration of the whole department. His title was,

'Smith professor of modern literature;' but we always called him 'the head,' because he was head of the department. We never knew when he might look in on a recitation and virtually conduct it. We were delighted to have him come. Any slipshod work of some poor wretch from France, who was tormented by wild-cat sophomores, would be made straight and decorous and all right. We all knew he was a poet, and were proud to have him in the college; but at the same time we respected him as a man of affairs.

"Besides this, he lectured on authors, or more general subjects. I think attendance was voluntary, but I know we never missed a lecture.' I have full notes of his lectures on Dante's '*Divina Commedia*,' which confirm my recollections; namely, that he read the whole to us in English, and explained whatever he thought needed comment. I have often referred to these notes since. And though I suppose that he included all that he thought worth while in his note to his translation of Dante, I know, that, until that was published, I could find no such reservoir of comment on the poem."

It appears to be the testimony of all who were so fortunate as to receive instruction from Professor Longfellow, that he never talked or read or lectured for display, but always to put his auditors in possession of what he knew. No man had less of the schoolmaster, or of that dry and technical wisdom which the title of "Professor" too often implies. He did not profess learning, but practised it, and made it attractive by his example. As usual, many

anecdotes were told about him: and the under-graduate wits invented the customary number of jokes at his expense; but these, when coming to his knowledge, never annoyed him,—indeed, he oftentimes seemed to enjoy them. A peculiar weakness in his manner of dress prompted the college satirists to nonsensical doggerel, but even this did not offend him. The gibe of Margaret Fuller about a “dandy Pindar” took its sting from the slight youthful fondness of Longfellow for display in cravats and waistcoats,—as if he had carried the same foible into his poetry, which he never did.

Professor Longfellow always addressed the members of the various classes as “Mr.,” and thereby won their respect from the start. So exact was he in all matters of personal etiquette, that, as one writer remarks, “he laid the stress of his refinement upon all the members of his class.” As he rarely failed to praise the keener intellects, so did he invariably assist and encourage such as were slow of intellect.

Longfellow’s professional service at Harvard College proved an advantage to the college: it materially assisted his own reputation. It carried him into the best society of the time, where his charming manner and scholarly attainments made and established him a great favorite. He well understood the secret of the art of pleasing, but on no occasion was he given to flattery or fawning; and never did he go so far as to render himself ridiculous by ostentatiousness or uncalled-for pedantry. He was ever modest, even to a fault: he was shy of his own

ability; he seemed to undervalue his powers of mind, and to dwell always in the fear that others would over-value them. As a teacher, he suffered from having a highly sensitive nature: he never liked to trouble anybody, even to ask a favor; and the mis-haps and perplexities of others affected him more than his own.

He well understood the work that was set before him, and he kept it uppermost in his thoughts. Though desirous of literary honors, and a lover of literary toil, he ever placed the art of teaching before the art of authorship, the advancements of his pupils before his own advancement. The statutes governing his department compelled him to deliver usually three lectures a week during the college term. This was no sinecure task, but one which involved careful study and arduous preparation. Still, he never shirked its responsibility: to the last hour of his professional service, he was patient, faithful, trusted, and trustful; and, as we all know, whatever he did redounded to the welfare of the institution in which he labored.

## CHAPTER IX.

## “HYPERION” AND “VOICES OF THE NIGHT.”

(1839.)

WHILE travelling in Switzerland in the summer of 1836, Professor Longfellow met and became acquainted with Mr. Nathan Appleton of Boston, who, with his family, was making the tour of the Continent in a style fully justified by his ample means. Mr. Appleton, then nearly sixty years of age, was noted for his large heart and amiability; his daughter, Miss Frances Elizabeth Appleton, for her surpassing beauty; and the young professor for his modest demeanor and scholarly attainments. Altogether it was a pleasant company.

At the time of this felicitous meeting, the Appletons were about to cross over the mountains, accompanied by their footmen and postilions. The professor was invited to join them, and to take a seat in the carriage. He did so, and became the *vis-a-vis* of the charming young lady, whose face and figure grew lovelier in his eyes the longer he gazed upon them.

When they arrived at Zurich, the members of the party made numerous side excursions, but always returned to “The Raven” inn for the night. A whole



week passed on, and it became evident that love was again weaving its spell around the professor's heart. But the young lady was not to be so easily won, — at least not for the present. On the day of departure from the inn, an incident occurred which will bear repeating. On arriving at the inn, Mr. Appleton had written his name in the register, and had added a few words of compliment to the place. When the bill was brought to him, he found, much to his chagrin, that it was exorbitant.

“But I have not written my name,” said Mr. Longfellow; “and, if you will allow me, I will treat the inn-keeper as he deserves.”

So saying, the professor withdrew with the book, and had presently written over his name the following:—

“Beware of the raven of Zurich!  
 'Tis a bird of omen ill,  
 With a noisy and an unclean nest,  
 And a very, very long bill.”

Not long afterwards the party separated, — the Appletons went in one direction, and Professor Longfellow in another. In the heart of the latter was brought back to America the image of her who had so completely captivated it. It was destined to linger there until it should be fairly won by the charming and persuasive eloquence of the hero of a romance.

Meanwhile, amid the duties of his professional life at Cambridge, Longfellow conceived the idea of writing a story. He was still lodging in the south-east chamber of the Craigie House; and here,

in the winter of 1838-9, he planned and worked out and completed the work. It was called "Hyperion: a Romance," and was published in the summer of 1839 by Samuel Colman, who had then removed to New York.<sup>1</sup>

People who expected to find in "Hyperion" a "prodigious amount of diabolical mysteries, trap-doors without number, subterranean dungeons, and the clanking of chains," were greatly disappointed; for it was by no means a story of this description, but rather one whose quiet, delicate, and beautiful pictures contrasted with the terrific scenes of old romance, like a soft, autumnal scene compared with the landscape swept by the tropical hurricane. The actors, like the *personæ* in a Greek play, were few. All the materials, thoughts, feelings, scenery, and illustrations were drawn from the regions of romantic sentiment and poetry. The author was an American, who had known sorrow, who was a lover of the Middle Ages, who was a great and observing traveller, a student, and something of a poet. With a memory stored with the legends of the mediæval period, he was eager to carry his reader back with himself to the illusions of the past.

And now let us glance at the romance itself, and, with the help of a few extracts, endeavor to learn the secret of its popularity.

The story, if one chooses to call it such, intro-

<sup>1</sup> The following was the full title: Hyperion: a Romance. By the author of *Outre-Mer*. New York: Samuel Colman. In 2 vols. 12mo, pp. 213, 226.

On the eve of its publication, Mr. Colman failed; and the work was undertaken by Mr. John Owen of Cambridge.

duces its hero “pursuing his way along the Rhine to the south of Germany.” His name is Paul Flemming, — a convenient substitute for the author’s own.

“The setting of a great hope is like the setting of the sun. The brightness of our life is gone. Shadows of evening fall around us; and the world seems but a dim reflection, — itself a broader shadow. We look forward into the coming lonely night. The soul withdraws into itself. Then stars arise, and the night is holy.

“Paul Flemming had experienced this, though still young. The friend of his youth was dead. The bough had broken ‘under the burden of the unripe fruit.’ And when, after a season, he looked up again from the blindness of his sorrow, all things seemed unreal. Like the man whose sight had been restored by miracle, he beheld men, as trees, walking. His household gods were broken. He had no home. His sympathies cried aloud from his desolate soul; and there came no answer from the busy, turbulent world around him. He did not willingly give way to grief. He struggled to be cheerful, — to be strong. But he could no longer look into the familiar faces of his friends. He could no longer live alone where he had lived with her. He went abroad, that the sea might be between him and the grave. Alas! between him and his sorrow there could be no sea, but that of time.

“He had already passed many months in lonely wandering, and was now pursuing his way along the Rhine, to the south of Germany. He had journeyed the same way before, in brighter days and a brighter season of the year, in the May of life and in the month of May. He knew the beautiful river all by heart, — every rock and ruin, every echo, every legend. The ancient castles,

grim and hoar, that had taken root as it were on the cliffs, — they were all his ; for his thoughts dwelt in them, and the wind told him tales.”

In the next five chapters the author gives a picturesque description of the journey along the Rhine, and interweaves into it many of the old legends and traditions of that region. By and by Paul Fleming arrives at the castle of Heidelberg ; and there he encounters a young German baron, with whom he is to pass the winter. From the seventh chapter I take the following interesting passage : —

“What a strange picture a university presents to the imagination ! The lives of scholars in their cloistered stillness ; literary men of retired habits ; and professors who study sixteen hours a day, and never see the world but on a Sunday. Nature has, no doubt for some wise purpose, placed in their hearts this love of literary labor and seclusion. Otherwise, who would feed the undying lamp of thought ? But for such men as these, a blast of wind through the chinks and crannies of this old world, or the flapping of a conqueror’s banner, would blow it out forever. The light of the soul is easily extinguished. And, whenever I reflect upon these things, I become aware of the great importance, in a nation’s history, of the individual fame of scholars and literary men. I fear that it is far greater than the world is willing to acknowledge, or, perhaps I should say, than the world has thought of acknowledging. Blot out from England’s history the names of Chaucer, Shakspeare, Spenser, and Milton only, and how much of her glory would you blot out with them ! Take from Italy such names as Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Michel Angelo, and Raphael, and

how much would be wanting to the completeness of her glory! How would the history of Spain look, if the leaves were torn out on which are written the names of Cervantes, Lope de Vega, and Calderon? What would be the fame of Portugal without her Camoens; of France without her Racine and Rabelais and Voltaire; or of Germany without her Martin Luther, her Goethe, and her Schiller?—Nay, what were the nations of old without their philosophers, poets, and historians? Tell me, do not these men, in all ages and in all places, emblazon with bright colors the armorial bearings of their country? Yes, and far more than this: for in all ages and in all places they give humanity assurance of its greatness, and say, ‘Call not this time or people wholly barbarous; for thus much, even then and there, could the human mind achieve!’ But the boisterous world has hardly thought of acknowledging all this. Therein it has shown itself somewhat ungrateful. Else, whence the great reproach, the general scorn, the loud derision, with which, to take a familiar example, the monks of the Middle Ages are regarded? That they slept their lives away is most untrue. For in an age when books were few,—so few, so precious, that they were often chained to their oaken shelves with iron chains, like galley-slaves to their benches,—these men, with their laborious hands, copied upon parchment all the lore and wisdom of the past, and transmitted it to us. Perhaps it is not too much to say, that, but for these monks, not one line of the classics would have reached our day. Surely, then, we can pardon something to those superstitious ages, perhaps even the mysticism of the scholastic philosophy; since, after all, we can find no harm in it, only the mistaking of the possible for the real, and the high aspirings of the human mind after a long-sought and unknown



somewhat. I think the name of Martin Luther, the monk of Wittenberg, alone sufficient to redeem all monkhood from the reproach of laziness. If this will not, perhaps the vast folios of Thomas Aquinas will ; or the countless manuscripts, still treasured in old libraries, whose yellow and wrinkled pages remind one of the hands that wrote them and the faces that once bent over them."

From the chapter on "Literary Fame" I quote the following significant paragraphs:—

" 'But, at any rate, a town life is most eventful,' continued the baron. 'The men who make or take the lives of poets and scholars, always complain that these lives are barren of incidents. Hardly a literary biography begins without some such apology, unwisely made. I confess, however, that it is not made without some show of truth, if by incidents we mean only those startling events which suddenly turn aside the stream of time, and change the world's history in an hour. There is certainly a uniformity, pleasing or unpleasing, in literary life, which for the most part makes to-day seem twin-born with yesterday. But if by incidents you mean events in the history of the human mind, (and why not?) noiseless events, that do not scar the forehead of the world as battles do, yet change it not the less, then surely the lives of literary men are most eventful. The complaint and the apology are both foolish. I do not see why a successful book is not as great an event as a successful campaign, only different in kind, and not easily compared.'

" 'Indeed,' interrupted Flemming, 'in no sense is the complaint strictly true, though at times apparently so. Events enough there are, were they all set down. A life that is worth writing at all is worth writing minutely.

Besides, all literary men have not lived in silence and solitude, — not all in stillness, not all in shadow. For many have lived in troubled times, in the rude and adverse fortunes of the state and age, and could say, with Wallenstein, —

“Our life was but a battle and a march;  
And, like the wind’s blast, never resting, homeless,  
We stormed across the war-convulsèd earth.”

Many such examples has history recorded, — Dante, Cervantes, Byron, and others, men of iron, — men who have dared to breast the strong breath of public opinion, and, like spectre-ships, come sailing right against the wind. Others have been puffed out by the first adverse wind that blew; disgraced and sorrowful, because they could not please others. Had they been men, they would have made these disappointments their best friends, and learned from them the needful lesson of self-reliance.’

“‘To confess the truth,’ added the baron, ‘the lives of literary men, with their hopes and disappointments, and quarrels and calamities, present a melancholy picture of man’s strength and weakness. On that very account the scholar can make them profitable for encouragement, consolation, warning.’

“‘And, after all,’ continued Flemming, ‘perhaps the greatest lesson which the lives of literary men teach us is told in a single word, — Wait! Every man must patiently bide his time. He must wait. More particularly in lands like my native land, where the pulse of life beats with such feverish and impatient throbs, is the lesson needful. Our national character wants the dignity of repose. We seem to live in the midst of a battle, — there is such a din, such a hurrying to and fro. In the streets of a crowded city it is difficult to walk slowly.

You feel the rushing of the crowd, and rush with it onward. In the press of our life it is difficult to be calm. In this stress of wind and tide, all professions seem to drag their anchors, and are swept out into the main. The voices of the Present say, "Come!" But the voices of the Past say, "Wait!" With calm and solemn footsteps the rising tide bears against the rushing torrent up stream, and pushes back the hurrying waters. With no less calm and solemn footsteps, nor less certainty, does a great mind bear up against public opinion, and push back its hurrying stream. Therefore should every man wait, — should bide his time; not in listless idleness, not in useless pastime, not in querulous dejection, but in constant, steady, cheerful endeavors, always willing and fulfilling, and accomplishing his task, that, when the occasion comes, he may be equal to the occasion. And, if it never comes, what matters it? What matters it to the world whether I or you or another man did such a deed, or wrote such a book, so be it the deed and book were well done? It is the part of an indiscreet and troublesome ambition to care too much about fame, — about what the world says of us, to be always looking into the faces of others for approval, to be always anxious for the effect of what we do and say, to be always shouting to hear the echo of our own voices. If you look about you, you will see men who are wearing life away in feverish anxiety of fame; and the last we shall ever hear of them will be the funeral bell that tolls them to their early graves! Unhappy men, and unsuccessful! because their purpose is, not to accomplish well their task, but to clutch the "trick and fantasy of fame;" and they go to their graves with purposes unaccomplished and wishes unfulfilled. Better for them, and for the world in their example, had they known how to wait! Believe me, the

talent of success' is nothing more than doing what you can do well, and doing well whatever you do, without a thought of fame. If it come at all, it will come because it is deserved, not because it is sought after. And, moreover, there will be no misgivings, no disappointment, no hasty, feverish, exhausting excitement.' ”

The winter has passed pleasantly by, and spring has come. The two friends hold numerous conversations, and discuss many questions of literary criticism. Then they make another journey together, visiting Frankfort, the birthplace of Goethe. In midsummer they part company.

The next chapters give us descriptions of new scenery. Paul Flemming is travelling in Switzerland; and at Interlachen he meets a former travelling companion, lounging in the hotel.

“On the sofa sat a gentleman reading, — a stout gentleman of perhaps forty-five, round, ruddy, and with a head which, being a little bald on the top, looked not unlike a crow's nest with one egg in it. A good-humored face turned from the book as Flemming entered, and a good-humored voice exclaimed, —

“ ‘Ha, Mr. Flemming! Is it you, or your apparition? I told you we should meet again, though you were for taking an eternal farewell of your fellow-traveller.’

“Saying these words, the stout gentleman rose, and shook Flemming heartily by the hand. And Flemming returned the shake as heartily, recognizing in this ruddy personage a former travelling-companion, Mr. Berkley, whom he had left, a week or two previous, toiling up the Righi. Mr. Berkley was an Englishman of fortune, — a good-humored, humane old bachelor, remarkable alike

for his common sense and his eccentricity. That is to say, the basis of his character was good, sound, common sense, trodden down and smoothed by education; but this level groundwork his strange and whimsical fancy used as a dancing-floor whereon to exhibit her eccentric tricks. His ruling passion was cold bathing; and he usually ate his breakfast sitting in a tub of cold water, and reading a newspaper. He kissed every child he met, and to every old man said, in passing, 'God bless you!' with such an expression of voice and countenance, that no one could doubt his sincerity. He reminded one of Roger Bontemps, or the Little Man in Gray, though with a difference."

While they are conversing, a female figure, clothed in black, enters the room, and sits down by the window. Flemming cannot help admiring her, inquires of his friend her name, and is told that it is Mary Ashburton, "the daughter of an English officer who died not long ago at Naples." She is the heroine, and in the next chapter we become better acquainted with her.

"Mary Ashburton was in her twentieth summer. Like the fair maiden Amoret, she was sitting in the lap of womanhood. They did her wrong who said she was not beautiful; and yet —

"She was not fair,  
Nor beautiful: those words express her not.  
But oh, her looks had something excellent,  
That wants a name!"

"Her face had a wonderful fascination in it. It was such a calm, quiet face, with the light of the rising soul



shining so peacefully through it. At times it wore an expression of seriousness, — of sorrow even, — and then seemed to make the very air bright with what the Italian poets so beautifully call the *lampeggiar dell’ angelico riso*, the lightning of the angelic smile.

“And oh, those eyes! those deep, unutterable eyes, with ‘down-falling eyelids full of dreams and slumber,’



Mary Ashburton.

and within them a cold, living light, as in mountain lakes at evening, or in the river of Paradise, forever gliding, —

“‘With a brown, brown current,  
Under the shade perpetual, that never  
Ray of the sun lets in, nor of the moon.’

“I dislike an eye that twinkles like a star. Those only are beautiful which, like the planets, have a steady, lambent light, — are luminous, but not sparkling. Such eyes the Greek poets give to immortals.

“The lady’s figure was striking. Every step, every attitude, was graceful, and yet lofty, as if inspired by the soul within. Angels in the old poetic philosophy have such forms: it was the soul itself imprinted on the air. And what a soul was hers! A temple dedicated to heaven, and, like the Pantheon at Rome, lighted only from above. And earthly passions in the form of gods were no longer there, but the sweet and thoughtful faces of Christ and the Virgin Mary and the saints. Thus there was not one discordant thing in her, but a perfect harmony of figure and face and soul, — in a word, of the whole being. And he who had a soul to comprehend hers must of necessity love her, and, having once loved her, could love no other woman forevermore.

“No wonder, then, that Flemming felt his heart drawn towards her, as, in her morning walk, she passed him, sitting alone under the great walnut-trees near the cloister, and thinking of heaven, not of her. She, too, was alone. Her cheek was no longer pale, but glowing and bright, with the inspiration of the summer air. Flemming gazed after her till she disappeared, even as a vision of his dreams, he knew not whither. He was not yet in love, but very near it; for he thanked God that he had made such beautiful beings to walk the earth.”

In the following chapters is told the tale of the hero’s love for Miss Ashburton. There are no commonplace incidents, no domestic entanglements, none of the apparatus of our modern novels. On the contrary, it is a simple delineation of delicate and high-wrought passion, cherished among the sublimest scenes in nature, and leading to a melancholy conclusion, in perfect harmony with the general tone of

the book. The scene in which Paul Flemming declares his love and is rejected is highly poetic, and worthy of reproduction : —



Burg Unspunnen.

“ They were sitting together one morning on the green, flowery meadow, under the ruins of Burg Unspunnen. She was sketching the ruins. The birds were singing, one and all, as if there were no aching hearts, no sin nor

sorrow, in the world. So motionless was the bright air, that the shadow of the trees lay engraven on the grass. The distant snow-peaks sparkled in the sun; and nothing frowned, save the square tower of the old ruin above them.

“ ‘What a pity it is,’ said the lady, as she stopped to rest her weary fingers, ‘what a pity it is, that there is no old tradition connected with this ruin!’

“ ‘I will make you one, if you wish,’ said Flemming.

“ ‘Can you make old traditions?’

“ ‘Oh, yes! I made three, the other day, about the Rhine, and one very old one about the Black Forest. A lady with dishevelled hair, a robber with a horrible slouched hat, and a night storm among the roaring pines.’

“ ‘Delightful! Do make one for me.’

“ ‘With the greatest pleasure. Where will you have the scene? Here, or in the Black Forest?’

“ ‘In the Black Forest, by all means! Begin.’

“ ‘I will unite this ruin and the forest together. But first promise not to interrupt me. If you snap the golden threads of thought, they will float away on the air like the film of the gossamer; and I shall never be able to recover them.’

“ ‘I promise.’

“ ‘Listen, then, to the tradition of “THE FOUNTAIN OF OBLIVION.”’

“ ‘Begin.’

“ ‘Flemming was reclining on the flowery turf at the lady’s feet, looking up with dreamy eyes into her sweet face, and then into the leaves of the linden-trees overhead.

“ ‘Gentle lady, dost thou remember the linden-trees of Bülach, — those tall and stately trees, with velvet down upon their shining leaves, and rustic benches underneath their overhanging eaves? A leafy dwelling, fit to be the home of elf or fairy, where first I told my love to thee,

thou cold and stately Hermione! A little peasant-girl stood near, and listened all the while, with eyes of wonder and delight, and an unconscious smile, to hear the stranger still speak on, in accents deep yet mild, — none else was with us in that hour, save God and that little child!’

“‘Why, it is in rhyme!’

“‘No, no! the rhyme is only in your imagination. You promised not to interrupt me, and you have already snapped asunder the gossamer threads of as sweet a dream as was ever spun from a poet’s brain.’

“‘It certainly did rhyme!’

“‘This was the reverie of the student Hieronymus, as he sat at midnight in a chamber of this old tower, with his hands clasped together, and resting upon an open volume, which he should have been reading. His pale face was raised, and the pupils of his eyes dilated, as if the spirit-world were open before him, and some beauteous vision were standing there, and drawing the student’s soul through his eyes up into heaven, — as the evening sun, through parting summer clouds, seems to draw into its bosom the vapors of the earth. Oh, it was a lovely vision! I can see it before me now!

“‘Near the student stood an antique bronze lamp, with strange figures carved upon it. It was a magic lamp, which once belonged to the Arabian astrologer El Geber, in Spain. Its light was beautiful as the light of stars; and night after night, as the lonely wight sat alone and read in this lofty tower, through the mist and murk and dropping rain it streamed out into the darkness, and was seen by many wakeful eyes. To the poor student Hieronymus it was a wonderful Aladdin’s Lamp; for in its flame a Divinity revealed herself unto him, and showed him treasures. Whenever he opened a ponderous, antiquated tome, it seemed as if some angel opened for him



the gates of Paradise ; and already he was known in the land as Hieronymus the Learned.

“ ‘ But, alas ! he could read no more. The charm was broken. Hour after hour he passed with his hands clasped before him, and his fair eyes gazing at vacancy. What could so disturb the studies of this melancholy wight ? Lady, he was in love ! Have you ever been in love ? He had seen the face of the beautiful Hermione ; and as, when we have thoughtlessly looked at the sun, our dazzled eyes, though closed, behold it still ; so he beheld by day and by night the radiant image of her upon whom he had too rashly gazed. Alas ! he was unhappy ; for the proud Hermione disdained the love of a poor student, whose only wealth was a magic lamp. In marble halls, and amid the gay crowd that worshipped her, she had almost forgotten that such a being lived as the student Hieronymus. The adoration of his heart had been to her only as the perfume of a wild-flower which she had carelessly crushed with her foot in passing. But he had lost all, for he had lost the quiet of his thoughts ; and his agitated soul reflected only broken and distorted images of things. The world laughed at the poor student, who, in his threadbare cassock, dared to lift his eyes to the lady Hermione ; while he sat alone in his desolate chamber, and suffered in silence. He remembered many things which he would fain have forgotten, but which, if he had forgotten them, he would have wished again to remember. Such were the lindentrees of Bülach, under whose pleasant shades he had told his love to Hermione. This was the scene which he wished most to forget, yet loved most to remember ; and of this he was now dreaming, with his hands clasped upon his book, and that music in his thoughts, which you, lady, mistook for rhyme.

“ ‘ Suddenly, with a melancholy clang, the convent

clock struck twelve. It roused the student Hieronymus from his dream, and rang in his ears, like the iron hoofs of the steeds of time. The magic hour had come when the Divinity of the lamp most willingly revealed herself to her votary. The bronze figures seemed alive ; a white cloud rose from the flame, and spread itself through the chamber ; the four walls dilated into magnificent cloud-vistas ; a fragrance, as of wild-flowers, filled the air ; and a dreamy music, like distant, sweet-chiming bells, announced the approach of the midnight Divinity. Through his streaming tears the heart-broken student beheld her once more descending a pass in the snowy cloud-mountains, as, at evening, the dewy Hesperus comes from the bosom of the mist, and assumes his station in the sky. At her approach, his spirit grew more calm ; for her presence was, to his feverish heart, like a tropical night, — beautiful and soothing and invigorating. At length she stood before him, revealed in all her beauty ; and he comprehended the visible language of her sweet but silent lips, which seemed to say, “What would the student Hieronymus to-night?” — “Peace !” he answered, raising his clasped hands, and smiling through his tears. “The student Hieronymus imploreth peace !” — “Then go,” said the spirit, “go to the Fountain of Oblivion in the deepest solitude of the Black Forest, and cast this scroll into its waters ; and thou shalt be at peace once more.” Hieronymus opened his arms to embrace the Divinity, for her countenance assumed the features of Hermione ; but she vanished away, the music ceased, the gorgeous cloud-land sank and fell asunder, and the student was alone within the four bare walls of his chamber. As he bowed his head downward, his eye fell upon a parchment scroll, which was lying beside the lamp. Upon it was written only the name of Hermione !

“ ‘The next morning Hieronymus put the scroll into his bosom, and went his way in search of the Fountain of Oblivion. A few days brought him to the skirts of the Black Forest. He entered, not without a feeling of dread, that land of shadows, and passed onward, under melancholy pines and cedars, whose branches grew abroad and mingled together, and, as they swayed up and down, filled the air with solemn twilight and a sound of sorrow. As he advanced into the forest, the waving moss hung, like curtains, from the branches overhead, and more and more shut out the light of heaven; and he knew that the Fountain of Oblivion was not far off. Even then the sound of falling waters was mingling with the roar of the pines above him; and ere long he came to a river, moving in solemn majesty through the forest, and falling with a dull, leaden sound into a motionless and stagnant lake, above which the branches of the forest met and mingled, forming perpetual night. This was the fountain of Oblivion.

“ ‘Upon its brink the student paused, and gazed into the dark waters with a steadfast look. They were limpid waters, dark with shadows only. And, as he gazed, he beheld, far down in their silent depths, dim and ill-defined outlines, wavering to and fro, like the folds of a white garment in the twilight. Then more distinct and permanent shapes arose, — shapes familiar to his mind, yet forgotten and remembered again, as the fragments of a dream; till at length, far, far below him, he beheld the great City of the Past, with silent marble streets, and moss-grown walls, and spires uprising with a wave-like, flickering motion.

“ ‘And amid the crowd that thronged those streets, he beheld faces once familiar and dear to him, and heard sorrowful, sweet voices singing, oh, forget us not! forget us not! and then the distant, mournful sound of funeral

bells, that were tolling below, in the City of the Past. But, in the gardens of that city, there were children playing, and among them one who wore his features, as they had been in childhood. He was leading a little girl by the hand, and caressed her often, and adorned her with flowers. Then, like a dream, the scene changed, and the boy had grown older, and stood alone, gazing into the sky ; and, as he gazed, his countenance changed again : and Hieronymus beheld him, as if it had been his own image in the clear water ; and before him stood a beauteous maiden, whose face was like the face of Hermione : and he feared lest the scroll had fallen into the water, as he bent over it.

“ ‘ Starting, as from a dream, he put his hand into his bosom, and breathed freely again when he found the scroll still there. He drew it forth, and read the blessed name of Hermione ; and the city beneath him vanished away, and the air grew fragrant as with the breath of May-flowers, and a light streamed through the shadowy forest, and gleamed upon the lake : and the student Hieronymus pressed the dear name to his lips, and exclaimed, with streaming eyes, “ Oh, scorn me as thou wilt, still, still will I love thee ; and thy name shall irradiate the gloom of my life, and make the waters of Oblivion smile ! ” And the name was no longer Hermione, but was changed to Mary ; and the student Hieronymus — is lying at your feet ! O gentle lady,

“ ‘ I did hear you talk  
Far above singing : after you were gone,  
I grew acquainted with my heart, and searched  
What stirred it so ! Alas ! I found it love.” ’ ’

After the love passages, Flemming is taken sick with a fever and is nursed by his English friend. At

length he recovers; and, after farther loiterings, he returns home to America.

Notwithstanding a certain crudeness of quality and a turgidness of style which were singularly absent from Mr. Longfellow's poetry at the same period, "Hyperion" was extremely popular; and up to 1857 nearly fifteen thousand copies had been sold in America. There is no doubt that it did great service in its day, and shared with Carlyle's essays the merit of directing the attention of English-speaking people to the wealth of German literature. Even at this day "Hyperion" is regarded by many tourists as the best guide to Heidelberg and the Rhine region.

In July, 1852, Mr. Birket Foster and a party of friends undertook a Continental trip, with the view of following in the footsteps of the hero of "Hyperion," and of delineating with scrupulous exactness the various scenes amid which its vivid incidents are laid. Certain incidents of this tour are worthy of recount. The party found that the landlord of the hotel (the Lily) at Andernach, where Longfellow stopped, still remembered the poet's visit with perfect distinctness. At Heidelberg, the house near the Carls Thor, where the poet resided, was visited; also, at Frankfort, Goethe's house, No. 74, in the Hirsch Graben, was carefully explored. The room in which Goethe was born was exhibited; also the visitors' book, in which was the autograph of Longfellow, which must have been added, however, at a subsequent visit, in 1843. At the hotel at Interlachen, the landlord did not remember Longfellow; but it



afterwards appeared that he had been proprietor of the house only three or four years. The tourists found that the poet's description of St. Gilgen and the adjacent places were minutely exact; and, on the evening of their arrival at the inn, they were lodged in the large room indicated by Longfellow as his apartment, — the windows of which were still latticed, with the flowers as usual on the window-sills and on the table. Franz Schondorfer, the proprietor, and his wife, were of course verging on a green old age. When his name was pointed out to him in a copy of “Hyperion,” the old man surveyed it through his spectacles with undisguised delight, and, pressing his finger against his breast, said proudly, “Franz Schondorfer! that's me! that's me!”

The little chapel of St. Gilgen, which contains the singular inscription that forms, as it were, the text upon which the romance of “Hyperion” was written, still stands on the south side of the churchyard. The inscription itself is on the eastern wall, and the last part of it reads thus : —

“Blicke nicht trauer'nd in die Vergangenheit,  
Sie komt nicht wieder; nütze Weisse die Gegenwart,  
Sie ist dein; der düstern Zukunft gehe ohne  
Furcht mit männlichen Sinne entgegen.”

Or, when translated, —

“Look not mournfully into the Past. It comes  
Not back again. Wisely improve the present.  
It is thine. Go forth to meet the shadowy  
Future without fear, and with a manly heart.”

The tourists were absent from London about six weeks; and during that time they became thoroughly familiarized with every page of "Hyperion," — "a noble work," as they assert, "on which its author might be well content to rest his hope of future



Chapel of St. Gilgen.

fame, even if he could not proudly point to innumerable other examples of his genius, that will perish only with the language in which his thoughts have found expression."

It was in the year 1834 that Longfellow sent his first contribution to "The Knickerbocker." In May of that year appeared the first instalment of what

promised to be a serial publication, entitled “The Blank-Book of a Country Schoolmaster.” The work is little more than a series of supposed excerpts from a teacher’s Journal ; and, in the first number, there are six of these, headed respectively, “Saturday Afternoon,” “An Old Saying,” “A Passage from Dante,” “The Happy Man and the Lucky Dog,” “Midnight Devotion,” and “Intellect.” As a specimen of the manner and style which pervade the whole production, I here reprint the following : —

“It is Saturday afternoon. Once more the school-house door has creaked upon its hebdomadal hinges ; the dog-eared book yawns upon the deserted desk ; the flies are buzzing and bumping their heads against the sunny window ; the schoolboy is abroad in the woods ; and the schoolmaster has laid his birchen sceptre upon the shelf, and with it the cares and solitudes of another week.

“Saturday afternoon ! delightful season, when the mind, like a tired artisan, lays down his implements of toil, and leaves the long-accustomed handicraft ! How sweet, amid the busy avocations of the week, to look forward to this short interval of repose, when, for a time at least, the grinding shall cease, and the heart be permitted to indulge its secret longings, and listen to the soft whispers of its own wayward fancies ! Surely the feelings of the schoolboy linger around me still. I love the *dolce far niente* of Saturday afternoon !

“It is an interlude between the swift-succeeding acts of life ; the close of a seven days’ journey ; a golden clasp that shuts each weekly volume of our

history; a goal where time pauses to rest his wing and turn his glass; a type of that longer interval of rest, when our evening sun shall be going down, when our lengthening shadows shall point towards morning, and we shall be looking forward to an eternal sabbath!"

The second instalment of "The Blank-Book" was published in the September number of the magazine. It was made up of short articles on the following subjects: "Imitation," "An Obituary," "A Cure for Celibacy," "The Christian Fathers," "Plagiarists," "Poetry," and "Where is Peter Grimm?" The last named contains the author's version of an old German song, "The Song of the Rhine," beginning, —

"Forth rolled the Rhine-stream strong and deep,  
Beneath Helvetia's Alpine steep,  
And joined in youthful company,  
Its fellow-travellers to the sea," etc.

I may remark, in passing, that the December number of the magazine contained a humorous sketch, in the form of a story, entitled "The Set of China;" also an extract from an unpublished poem, entitled "The Dead," — both of them by Longfellow. The extract is here given entire: —

"The spirits of the loved and the departed  
Are with us, and they tell us of the sky, —  
A rest for the bereaved and broken-hearted,  
A house not made with hands, a home on high;  
Holy monitions — a mysterious breath —  
A whisper from the marble halls of death.

They have gone from us, and the grave is strong:  
Yet in night's silent watches they are near;  
Their voices linger round us, as the song  
Of the sweet sky-lark lingers on the ear,  
When floating upward, in the flush of even,  
Its form is lost from earth, and swallowed up in heaven.”

“Knickerbocker” for January, 1835, contained No. 3 of “The Blank-Book.” In it were the following headings: “History,” “A Wise Saw,” “Autumn,” and “The Death of the Young.” Here the serial ended, cut short probably by the author's rather sudden departure for Europe. However, in the same issue of the magazine appeared an article on “The Rosicrucian Philosophy,” written by Longfellow, also another unfinished poetic fragment entitled “The Soul.” The June number contained a poem of sixty-three lines, entitled “Apostrophe to Time,” which was written by Mr. Longfellow in the preceding month of May, at the time of his visit at the home of Shakspeare.

During his absence abroad Mr. Longfellow contributed nothing to the magazine, with the single exception of the poem last mentioned. On his return home, however, he again took up the pen in its behalf. In December, 1837, there appeared in the pages of “Knickerbocker” a poem entitled “Floral Astrology,” beginning,—

“Spake full well, in language quaint and olden,  
One who dwelleth by the castled Rhine,  
When he called the flowers, so blue and golden,  
Stars, that in earth's firmament do shine.”



This poem is the first one, I believe, which was publicly acknowledged by its author. It is signed, "Cambridge University, H. W. Longfellow." All of the earlier poems and translations, also all the prose articles, by the same writer, either bore the simple signature "H. W. L.," or "L," or nothing whatsoever.

Through the years 1838 and 1839 Mr. Longfellow wrote several poems, and published them in "The Knickerbocker Magazine." Of these I purpose to speak presently.

Late in the autumn of 1839 Mr. Longfellow published his first volume of poems, under the general title of the "Voices of the Night." In this little book of one hundred and forty-four pages he included seven of his earlier pieces, which appeared first in "The United-States Literary Gazette;" twenty-three translations, a few of which had already been printed, either in "The Knickerbocker" or in "The North American Review;" and eight poems of later date, of which six had appeared in "The Knickerbocker," together with a poetic prelude. The volume was brought out at Cambridge by Mr. John Owen; and the following was the title-page: "Voices of the Night. By H. W. Longfellow. Cambridge: published by John Owen. 1839." It comprised, as before stated, one hundred and forty-four pages, and the size was a sixteen mo. Like many other publications of that day, the book was bound in a light cream-colored flexible paper cover, decorated with elaborate colored designs. On the front cover was a landscape scene by night, half concealed by a drawn

curtain. As a whole, the general style and make-up of the book was unique, and, when looked upon to-day, is indeed a great curiosity.

Mr. Owen's recollections of the publication of the work are interesting; and I will now give them in his own words, as repeated to me:—

“At the time when I published ‘Voices of the Night,’ I had been carrying on the book-business alone for nearly three years. But I had been engaged in the business since 1834 or thereabouts. During the years following Mr. Longfellow's arrival in Cambridge, the poet—“the Professor” we called him then—used often to drop into the store; indeed, I think I saw him about every day. When, in 1837, he went to live in the Craigie House, I frequently called upon him there, especially in the evening. When Longfellow first came to Cambridge in 1835, I believe that I was the one whom he sought first. He told me that he had been invited to take Professor Ticknor's place in the college, and that he had virtually accepted, and was now about to make another trip to Europe. It was a bitter cold day, as I well remember, when we walked over into the College Square. We were just nearing old ‘Massachusetts Hall,’ when we met Felton, to whom I introduced my old friend and schoolmate. They became sociable at once: Longfellow was invited by Felton to call upon him before he should leave Cambridge. In a day or so afterwards Longfellow called; and there he first saw and became acquainted with Sumner, who was a great favorite of Felton's, and was practising law in Boston.

“ Well, now, to go back to the book. Longfellow returned from Europe in 1837, and in the same year Sumner went to Europe. Longfellow began writing poetry again, and sent a number of pieces off to New York to be published. The ‘ Psalm of Life ’ came out in the fall of 1838, and was copied extensively throughout the country, without any name attached, however; for no one, except the editors of the magazine in which it was published and a few of the poet’s personal friends, knew who wrote it. After that, other poems by Longfellow appeared in the periodical; and they, too, were copied into many newspapers. Along in the summer of 1839,—I think it was just after Commencement,—I asked Mr. Longfellow why he did not reprint his poems in a volume, and suggested to him that it was then about time to acknowledge the authorship of them. He replied that he would think the matter over, and let me know further. One night, when the harvest moon never shone brighter, we were sitting looking out of the window at his room in the Craigie House: the subject of the book came up again; and he told me, that, if he could find a publisher, he would prepare the volume for the press. I suggested to him that I would like to be his publisher, to which he assented.

“ In due time he brought me ‘ copy ’ for the book, which ‘ copy ’ included all of the later poems and several translations. At Felton’s suggestion, he agreed to include also a few of his earlier poems; and it took him quite a while to decide which ones to choose. The terms of publication had already

been agreed upon. When it came to setting up the title-page, Mr. Longfellow, at the last moment, refused to allow his name to go on. I objected to this turn of mind, and appealed to his friends. After a little delay, he came in one morning, and quietly but abruptly told me to go ahead in my own way; which I did by printing his name on the title. The book came out at last. I don't believe he ever regretted following my advice. I have often remarked to him since, that, if he had insisted upon the book being issued anonymously, he would have thrown away the best opportunity a man ever had of making a reputation. The ‘Psalm of Life’ would have been admired none the less, but the author of it would have had but little of the credit that was his due. The ‘Voices of the Night’ was of course a success. When Sumner came home from Europe, early the next year, we all had a ‘little time’ celebrating the *bon voyage* of the book. But I shall tell you nothing about that.”

In the collected edition of the poet's works, as indeed in the original volume, the “Voices of the Night” includes the following poems: “Prelude,” “Hymn to the Night,” “A Psalm of Life,” “The Reaper and the Flowers,” “The Light of Stars,” “Footsteps of Angels,” “Flowers,” “The Beleaguered City,” and “Midnight Mass for the Dying Year.” I will now speak of these in the order of their first appearance in print. The earlier poems and translations will not be referred to further.

The poem that bears the name “Flowers” was identical with “Floral Astrology,” published in “The

Knickerbocker" in December, 1837. "The ideas expressed in the poem," said the poet to me one day, "were suggested to me while I was in Europe, after I had been reading a very curious German book. My knowledge of flowers and of the science of botany is very crude: I admire them, without troubling myself about their names."

The never-to-be-forgotten "Psalm of Life," signed "L.," was first printed in "The Knickerbocker" in September, 1838.

"After I had translated 'Coplas de Manrique,'" said the poet, "my mind was haunted for a long time with gloomy thoughts. I seemed to have a perfect fear of death. With the lesson of later years came also a re-action. Came suddenly the feelings which I tried to express in the 'Psalm of Life.' It was written in my chamber, as I sat looking out at the morning sun, admiring the beauty of God's creations and the excellence of his plan. The poem was not printed until some months later, and even then with reluctance."

It is not too much to affirm that this little song of life is perhaps the most famous of the productions of its distinguished author. Few poems have been oftener committed to memory, or have penetrated deeper into the human heart. The poet often told the following incident: he was once riding through one of the streets of London, when a laboring-man came up to the carriage, and inquired, "Are you the writer of the 'Psalm of Life'?" He replied that he was. "Will you allow me to take you by the hand?" The two shook hands, and the carriage



was driven on. "That compliment," said Mr. Longfellow, "gave me more happiness than any I have ever received."

In a letter dated "15th of October, 1842," and addressed by Sumner to Longfellow, while the latter was in Europe, occurs the following:—

"A few days ago an old classmate, upon whom the world had not smiled, came to my office to prove some debts before me in bankruptcy. While writing the formal parts of the paper, I inquired about his reading, and the books which interested him now. I believe he has been a great reader. He said that he read very little; that he hardly found any thing which was written from the heart, and was really true. 'Have you read Longfellow's "Hyperion"?' I said. 'Yes,' he replied, 'and I admire it very much: I think it a very great book.' He then added in a very solemn manner, 'I think I may say that Longfellow's "Psalm of Life" saved me from suicide. I first found it on a scrap of newspaper, in the hands of two Irishwomen, soiled and worn; and I was at once touched by it.' Think, my dear friend, of this soul into which you have poured the waters of life. Such a tribute is higher than the words of Rogers, much as I value them."

The sweet poem bearing the title of "The Reaper and the Flowers" was originally published in "The Knickerbocker," in January, 1839, under the name of "A Psalm of Death." It was signed "L." In the same number appeared "A Second Psalm of Life," now familiar as "The Light of Stars:" it was signed "L." Mr. Fields states that "The Reaper

and the Flowers" came without effort, crystallized into the poet's mind; and that "The Light of Stars" was composed on a serene and beautiful summer evening, exactly suggestive of the poem.

In May, 1839, appeared in "The Knickerbocker" "Voices of the Night," a third psalm of life. It began, —

"When the hours of day are numbered,  
And the voices of the night  
Wake the better soul, that slumbered,  
To a holy, calm delight," etc.

Most people will recognize these lines as being those of the opening stanza of the "Footsteps of Angels," the title finally selected by the poet. The origin of the poem may be easily surmised. I refrain from repeating it as it was told to me by Mr. Longfellow.

"The Fifth Psalm" was first printed in "The Knickerbocker" in October, 1839. It now bears the title of a "Midnight Mass for the Dying Year," and opens with the lines, —

"Yes, the year is growing old,  
And his eye is pale and bleared:  
Death, with frosty hand and cold,  
Plucks the old man by the beard,  
Sorely, sorely!"

"The original draught of this poem," said Mr. Longfellow, "was written in Heidelberg. I re-wrote it afterwards, making many changes. It came to me naturally."

In the November number of the magazine, a capacious critic raised the following question. He wrote,

The Fifth Psalm

A Midnight Mass for the Dying Year

Yes, the Year is <sup>I.</sup> growing old,

And his eye is pale and blear'd,  
Death, with frosty hand and cold,

Plucks the old man by the beard,

Sorely sorely!

Sent over to  
Henry W. Longfellow  
Cambridge

at low end  
well placed in front  
(opposite)

about 10 ft. at  
upper part of the same exposure to

the power is used to lift  
the load and also to  
the load and power then, the  
load is put now to the  
! power power?

“The October number of ‘The Knickerbocker,’ although received rather late, has been devoured most greedily by our literary gourmands. The German-like solemnity and wildness of Professor Longfellow’s fifth psalm is incomparable. Could Goethe or Schiller be privileged to read it once, I think they would read it again. However, some few of Mr. Longfellow’s admirers are sadly puzzled, or, to say the least, suspicious of their knowledge, in relation to the ‘wind Euroclydon!’ ‘The euphony of the stanza is capital,’ say they; ‘but Euroclydon! what in the name of Boreas does it on the coast of Labrador?’ Gentlemen, poetry licenses a wind to blow where it listeth! ‘Out on your licenses!’ say they: the ‘Euroclydon is a bilious nor’easter, and bloweth only in the Mediterranean.’ I beg to be informed.”

In the next issue a southern correspondent came to the rescue, and defended the poet with all the chivalry of true scholarship. He said, “What makes your friend imagine that this wind blows only in the Mediterranean? Because it was first called ‘Euroclydon’ in those regions? The same may be said of Boreas and sirocco. No: the word indicates a north-east wind, coming over the sea. Look into any good Greek lexicon, and you will find some such definition. The only place in which I have ever seen the word used before, is in Paul’s shipwreck, in the Acts. Just consult Robinson’s Greek and English lexicon of the New Testament: *Εὐροκλύδων*, Euroclydon, a tempestuous wind; Acts xxvii. 14; from *Εὐρος*, eurus, east wind, and *κλύδων*, a wave.’ Passow, a great authority, defines it, ‘A violent storm-wind,



which throws up the waves of the sea.' I could give some dozen authorities, were it necessary. You may rely upon it, Professor Longfellow knew what he was saying when he used the word."<sup>1</sup>

Of the remaining poems which were included in the "Voices of the Night," it is unnecessary here to speak. "That little volume," says Professor Everett, "formed an epoch in our history. It breathed his — Longfellow's — whole spirit, his energy, his courage, his tenderness, his faith: it formed the prelude of all that should come after." "I would rather be the author," wrote Sumner to his friend, Dr. Lieber, "of 'A Psalm of Life,' 'The Light of Stars,' 'The Reaper and the Flowers,' and 'Excelsior,' than those rich pieces of Gray. I think Longfellow without rival near his throne in America. I might go farther: I doubt if there is any poet now alive, and not older than he, who has written so much and so well."

<sup>1</sup> According to the Greek-English lexicon of Liddell and Scott, "the word *Euroclydon* seems to mean a storm from the east: but the readings vary remarkably, and the most probable is *εὐρακύλων* (Latin Vulgate *Euro-aquilo*), i.e., a north-east wind;" and this is adopted by Lachm; cf. *εὐρόνοτος*. "It is now called *Gregalia*, the most violent wind in the Mediterranean, usually blowing in the early spring."

## CHAPTER X.

### “BALLADS AND OTHER POEMS.”

(1840-1842.)

IN “The North-American Review” for October, 1840, appeared an article on “The French Language in England.” In this paper Professor Longfellow proposed to trace the history of the French language through the English statute-books, etc. He admits, at the start, that the theme is a barren one for most readers, but at the same time entreats them “not to turn away from these pages without first casting a glance at our illustrations. They are curious and amusing, and throw a gleam of light, now and then, upon the manners and customs of the past. On this account they will commend themselves to the notice of those who care not for the curiosities of language.”

The great success which attended the publication of the “Voices of the Night” encouraged Professor Longfellow to continue his work in the realm of poetry. In the autumn of 1841 he published “Ballads and other Poems,”<sup>1</sup> one of the choicest volumes which he ever gave to the public, and the contents

<sup>1</sup> Ballads and other Poems, by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, author of *Voices of the Night*, *Hyperion*, etc. Cambridge: John Owen. [12mo, pp. 132.]

of which the memories of all readers of poetry involuntarily retain.

The first piece in this volume was "The Skeleton in Armor," a most successful attempt to represent in English the spirit of the northern legend. "This ballad was suggested to me," said Professor Longfellow, "while riding on the seashore at Newport.



Round Tower, Newport, R.I.

A year or two previous a skeleton had been dug up at Fall River, clad in broken and corroded armor; and the idea occurred to me of connecting it with the Round Tower at Newport, generally known hitherto as the Old Windmill, though now claimed by the Danes as a work of their early ancestors."

Mr. Samuel Ward gives the following reminis-

cences of the poem, which, barring a single error, are important :—

“I remember once his writing to me to come on next Sunday, as he had something to show me and to consult me about. I obeyed the call with alacrity, and reached the house, as usual, in season for a tub before breakfast. It was his habit, during the boiling of his coffee-kettle, to work, at a standing-desk, upon a translation of Dante. So soon as the kettle hissed, he folded his portfolio, not to resume that work until the following morning. In this wise, by devoting ten minutes a day during many years, the lovely work grew, like a coral reef, to its completion. On the morning of the day in question, however, that task was relinquished; and, after breakfast, he told me that he had recently written a poem, which smiled to him, but which his habitual counsellors and companions—who I presume were Charles Sumner, C. C. Felton, and George S. Hillard—had frowned upon as beneath the plane of his previous lyrical performances. He then proceeded to read me ‘The Skeleton in Armor,’ which so stirred my blood that I took the manuscript from his hands and read it to him, with more dramatic force than his modesty had permitted him to display. This may have been presumptuous on my part; but I remember, when I came to the *crescendo*,—

“As with his wings aslant,  
Sails the fierce cormorant,  
Seeking some rocky haunt,  
With his prey laden;

So toward the open main,  
Beating to sea again  
Through the wild hurricane,  
Bore I the maiden,' —

he sprang to his feet and embraced me. The doubting Thomases were at a discount that morning. This poem revealed to me his methods of work. After the emotions of mutual satisfaction had subsided, he told me that he had carried the scheme in his head ever since the previous summer, when, after having visited, with a cavalcade of my brothers and sisters, — among whom was the present Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, — the skeleton in armor, dug up at Taunton, and then visible in a museum at Fall River — since burned to the ground, — he challenged my sister, in their home gallop over the Newport beaches, to make a poem out of the rusty hauberk and grim bones they had been inspecting. 'That,' said he, 'was nearly a year ago; and the poem only flashed upon me last week.' It will be remembered that the closing scene is laid

“ ‘ In that tower  
Which, to this very hour,  
Is looking seaward.’

“And now comes a curious illustration of the market value of poetry past and present. I proposed to take the manuscript to New York, and sell it for not less than fifty dollars. On my return thither, my first visit was to the poet Halleck, at his desk in the dingy counting-house of the primeval John Jacob Astor, in Prince Street. We had often talked about Longfellow; and Halleck felt and displayed a lively



appreciation of his genius, which he denied to the English laureate, whom we all venerate. The old poet was delighted with this new effusion of his younger lyrical brother; and, knowing the value of his opinion in the eyes of our literati, I asked him to express his admiration in a few brief words at the foot of the manuscript. If I remember rightly, the inscription ran, ‘I unhesitatingly pronounce the above to be, in my opinion, Professor Longfellow’s finest effort.’ This was duly signed; and I rushed down to Louis Gaylord Clarke, of ‘The Knickerbocker Magazine,’ who stood aghast when I announced the price of this poem, he having only paid twenty-five dollars for its predecessors. The intrinsic beauty of the lyric, which by this time I had learned to read with tolerable effect, overcame a reluctance to which his poverty, not his will, consented; and I had pride and pleasure in remitting the fifty dollars to Cambridge that evening.”

The poem was first given to the world in the pages of “The Knickerbocker,” in its issue of January, 1841. There is a statement in the foregoing recollections of Mr. Ward’s which does not tally with a remark made to me by the poet himself, and which is now recorded in my note-book. In answer to my inquiry, Mr. Longfellow stated that he was promised five dollars each for his contributions to “The Knickerbocker;” but that the sum-total received did not amount to that. He then added, “The brothers Clarke were noble fellows, and were struggling hard in those days for a livelihood. I have no reason to complain of what they did for me.”

As originally printed in the magazine, the poem was accompanied by a running commentary, which for some reason or other the poet saw fit to abandon.

The next poem in the volume was "The Wreck of the Hesperus," an admirable imitation of an old English ballad. The piece is of course familiar to most readers; but I cannot forbear to quote the following stanzas, which have surpassing descriptive beauty:—

"Colder and louder blew the wind,  
A gale from the north-east,  
The snow fell hissing in the brine,  
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain  
The vessel in its strength:  
She shuddered and paused, like a frightened steed,  
Then leaped her cable's length.

. . . . .

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,  
Through the whistling sleet and snow,  
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept  
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between,  
A sound came from the land:  
It was the sound of the trampling surf  
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,  
She drifted a dreary wreck,  
And a whooping billow swept the crew  
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves  
 Looked soft as carded wool;  
 But the cruel rocks, they gored her side  
 Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,  
 With the masts went by the board;  
 Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,  
 Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,  
 In the midnight and the snow!  
 Christ save us all from a death like this  
 On the reef of Norman's Woe!”

“This is one of the poems,” said Mr. Longfellow one day, “which I like to recall. It floats in my mind again and again, whenever I read of some of our frightful storms on the coast. Away back in the year when the ‘Voices of the Night’ was published, in the closing month of the year, the New-England coast was lashed by a terrible tempest; and there were numerous shipwrecks recorded. I remember reading in the newspapers one day of the loss of a schooner on the reef of Norman's Woe, called ‘The Hesperus.’ Norman's Woe is, as you are aware, a frowning mass of rocks, surrounded by the ocean, not far from Gloucester. It occurred to me to write a ballad, which I did some days afterwards, while I was sitting alone one night by the fire in the room above. It required two sittings to complete it, both in the same night, however.”

The poem was sent to Mr. Park Benjamin, and by him was printed in “The New World,” in January,

1840. Mr. Longfellow received twenty-five dollars for the production.

"The Luck of Edenhall" is a translation from the German of Uhland, and "The Elected Knight" a translation from the Danish. The three maidens spoken of in the piece are supposed to be Faith, Hope, and Charity. Still another translation is "The Two Locks of Hair," one of the most exquisite things in the volume.

Perhaps the most notable poem in the book is "Excelsior." One evening in the autumn of 1841, after he had been at a party, Mr. Longfellow caught sight of this word on a torn piece of newspaper. Thoughts seized upon his imagination, and the desire to write a poem became strong. Lying near was a letter from his friend Charles Sumner, which had been received that day. Without losing any time, he crowded the back of the letter with stanzas. Subsequently he re-wrote the poem, and published it in the perfected form which we read to-day. When Mr. Sumner again visited the Craigie House, the letter was shown to him. He requested its return, to which the poet assented. Mr. Sumner always preserved the document among his treasures; and, after his lamented decease, it came by his bequest into the possession of Harvard College, and is now kept in the library.

Longfellow's explanation of "Excelsior" is given in the following letter, addressed many years ago to Mr. H. T. Tuckerman. It was first published in "The London Telegraph."

"I have had the pleasure of receiving your note in

regard to the poem 'Excelsior,' and very willingly give you my intention in writing it. This was no more than to display, in a series of pictures, the life of a man of genius, resisting all temptations, laying aside all fears, heedless of all warnings, and pressing right on to accomplish his purpose. His motto is 'Excelsior,' — higher. He passes through the Alpine village, through the rough, cold paths of the world, where the peasants cannot understand him, and where his watchword is 'an unknown tongue.' He disregards the happiness of domestic peace, and sees the glaciers — his fate — before him. He disregards the warnings of the old man's wisdom and the fascinations of woman's love. He answers to all, 'Higher yet.' The monks of St. Bernard are the representatives of religious forms and ceremonies; and with their oft-repeated prayer mingles the sound of his voice, telling them there is something higher than forms or ceremonies. Filled with these aspirations, he perishes without having reached the perfection he longed for; and the voice heard in the air is the promise of immortality and progress ever upward. You will perceive that 'Excelsior,' an adjective of the comparative degree, is used adverbially, — a use justified by the best Latin writers."

The poem of "Excelsior" has given rise to numerous parodies, some of them being very amusing. Regarding one of these, Gen. James Grant Wilson thus writes: —

"The poet having told me that he had seen scores of parodies of 'Excelsior,' but had never met with one that my father had written, in which many dia-



lects are introduced, I sent it to him; and, when we met again, he amused all present by repeating three or four of the twenty-five verses describing a single hodman's ascent of a lofty ladder:—

“‘Mon ami, I vill parley vous  
 Von leetle vord; ’tis mah you do!  
 Ver goot, sare; Chacun à son gout;  
 Excelsior!

Brava! brava! bravissima!  
 Encore! excellentissima!  
 Primo tenor! dolcissima!  
 Excelsior!

By coot Saint Tavit an’ hur leek!  
 She’d rather fast for half ta week  
 Tan shuffle on tat shoggy stick!  
 Excelsior!

Mein Cot! dot man vill break him pones,  
 And knock him prain upon de stones.  
 Der Teufel! did you heert vat tones?  
 Excelsior!’”

Another poem in this volume is “The Village Blacksmith.” It opens with the familiar lines,—

“Under a spreading chestnut-tree  
 The village smithy stands:  
 The smith, a mighty man is he,  
 With large and sinewy hands;  
 And the muscles of his brawny arms  
 Are strong as iron bands.”

Many years ago the “village smithy” stood on Brattle Street, in Cambridge. When it was at last



"Under a spreading chestnut tree  
The village smithy stands

H. M. L. 1840



removed, a dwelling-house was erected in its place, to make room for which it became necessary to lop off some of the branches of the "spreading chestnut-tree" standing adjacent. A few years after, this tree presented such an unsightly appearance that an order was issued by the municipal authorities to have it cut down. "Early in the morning," says one who witnessed the proceeding, "the choppers were at it. Like burning sparks from the anvil the chips flew in every direction, and soon a crash was heard; and the cry went up, 'The old chestnut is down!' The word ran from lip to lip; and a crowd was quickly collected, all rushing out from house and shop just as they were, without coat or hat, and bearing off some fragments as a *souvenir*. They looked like ants bearing a burden bigger than themselves. But some city officer interfered, and the work of plunder ceased. From this destruction sprung the arm-chair which the children of Cambridge presented to Longfellow."

In the year 1842, long before this destruction, Mr. Longfellow made a pen-and-ink sketch of the smithy and the tree, as they then appeared. As the scene has now totally changed, this bit of the poet's personality is so fresh and dainty that I have had it reproduced and inserted here.

When in 1845 the poem of "The Village Blacksmith" was again passing through the press,<sup>1</sup> Mr.

<sup>1</sup> In the magnificent edition, illustrated by Huntington, of Longfellow's poems published in 1845 by Carey and Hart of Philadelphia. The same firm first brought out the Poets and Poetry of Europe.

Longfellow read portions of it to a barber in Cambridge. The latter criticised the line, —

“His hair is crisp and black and long,” —

by saying that crisp black hair is never long. The poet was struck with the worth of the assertion, and at once instructed his publisher to substitute “strong” for the word “long.” The next day he changed his mind, and again wrote to the publisher, “I wrote to you yesterday to have the word ‘long’ changed to ‘strong’ in ‘The Village Blacksmith.’ The word ‘strong’ occurs in the preceding line, and the repetition would be unpleasant. It had, therefore, better stand as it is, notwithstanding the hair-dresser’s criticism, which, after all, is only technical; for hair can be both crisp and long.”

Among the other poems in the volume are “Endymion,” very short, but as perfectly and clearly cut as a gem; “Blind Bartimeus,” which sounds like an old chant, and in which the simple words of the New Testament are applied with wonderful beauty; and “To the River Charles,” a poem which, now that the poet has left us, seems to have a new significance: —

“Thou hast taught me, silent river,  
Many a lesson, deep and long:  
Thou hast been a generous giver;  
I can give thee but a song.

Oft in sadness and in illness  
I have watched thy current glide,  
Till the beauty of its stillness  
Overflowed me like a tide.



And in better hours and brighter,  
 When I saw thy waters gleam,  
 I have felt my heart beat lighter,  
 And leap onward with thy stream.

Not for this alone I love thee,  
 Nor because thy waves of blue  
 From celestial seas above thee  
 Take their own celestial hue.

Where yon shadowy woodlands hide thee,  
 And thy waters disappear,  
 Friends I love have dwelt beside thee,  
 And have made thy margin dear.

More than this : thy name reminds me  
 Of three friends, all true and tried ;  
 And that name, like magic, binds me  
 Closer, closer to thy side.

Friends my soul with joy remembers !  
 How like quivering flames they start,  
 When I fan the living embers  
 On the hearthstone of my heart !

'Tis for this, thou silent river,  
 That my spirit leans to thee :  
 Thou hast been a generous giver ;  
 Take this idle song from me.”

The poem entitled “Maidenhood” has many admirers. A minister once took this poem as a text. After reading it through, he proceeded to draw several lessons from the verses. But the most noteworthy thing in the sermon was, the narration of the circumstance which gave rise to it. He told a story of a poor woman living in a lonely cabin in a sterile

portion of the North-West, to whom a friend of his had sent illustrated papers. From these the woman had cut the pictures, and papered the walls of her cabin with them; and an illustration of Longfellow's "Maidenhood," with the poem underneath it, she had placed directly over her work-table. There, as she stood at her breadmaking or ironing day after day, she gazed at the picture, and read the poem; till, by long brooding on it, she understood it, absorbed it, as few people appropriate the things they read. When the friend who had sent the papers visited her after a time, he, himself a man of letters, stood amazed and humbled while she talked to him artlessly about the poem, expounded to him its interior meaning, and expressed the thoughts she had drawn from it. The preacher said it was an instance of that benign compensation by which those who have little may draw the more from that little, so that one cup deeply drained may yield more of life's elixir than many that are sipped.

The longest poem in the volume, and the last to which I shall call attention, is entitled "The Children of the Lord's Supper." Longfellow received the original of this beautiful production of Bishop Tegnér from his friend Mr. Ward, who had himself received it from Baron Nordin, then Swedish minister at Washington. Longfellow completed his version within a fortnight. The original is in the hexameter measure: so also is the translation.

The translation is said to be very exact, and in the minute points of versification to be superior to the Swedish. Mr. Sumner once told me, that, when

Longfellow first read him the completed poem, he advised him to lay it aside, as unworthy of his time spent upon it. "It was many years before I could be made to see any beauty in it," he continued: "I am almost ashamed to confess it, for now I am a great admirer of the production."

The publication of Mr. Longfellow's second volume of poems was hailed everywhere with delight. All the literary journals in the country gave it a notice, and the sale of the book was extensive. Among the critics, one alone, Edgar A. Poe, found fault with what all the others commended. Inasmuch as Poe's spirited strictures have become matters of history, it is necessary here to allude to them.

In his criticism on "Ballads and other Poems," Edgar A. Poe wrote thus of Longfellow's translation of Tegnér's poem: —

"In attempting (what never should be attempted) a literal version of both the words and the metre of this poem, Professor Longfellow has failed to do justice, either to his author or himself. He has striven to do what no man ever did well, and what, from the nature of language itself, never *can* be well done. Unless, for example, we shall come to have an influx of *spondees* in our English tongue, it will always be impossible to construct an English hexameter. Our spondees, or, we should say, our spondaic words, are rare. In the Swedish they are nearly as abundant as in the Latin and Greek. We have only '*compound*,' '*context*,' '*footfall*,' and a few other similar ones. This is the difficulty; and that it *is* so will become evident upon reading 'The Children of

the Lord's Supper,' where the sole *readable* verses are those in which we meet with the rare *spondaic* dissyllables. We mean to say *readable as hexameters*, for many of them will read very well as mere English dactylics with certain irregularities."

Poe did not inform his readers of his total unacquaintance with the Swedish language, and the *original* of Tegnér's beautiful poem. His wild remarks on the subject of metre very justly suggested to Mr. Lowell those famous lines in the "Fable for Critics:"—

"Here comes Poe with his Raven, like Barnaby Rudge, —  
Three-fifths of him genius, and two-fifths sheer fudge;  
Who talks like a book of iambs and pentameters,  
In a way to make all men of common sense d—n meters;  
Who has written some things far the best of their kind,  
But somehow the heart seems squeezed out by the mind."

But Poe went still farther. He asserted that "Mr. Longfellow's conception of the *aims* of poesy is erroneous," and that, in the volume under notice, "there are not more than one or two" poems which fulfilled *Poe's* idea of poetry. The exceptions, which he thought were "poems nearly true," were "The Village Blacksmith," "The Wreck of the Hesperus," and "The Skeleton in Armor."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "I remember," says Mr. R. W. Griswold, "having been shown by Mr. Longfellow, several years ago, a series of papers, which constitute a demonstration that Mr. Poe was indebted to him for the idea of The Haunted Palace, one of the most admirable of his poems, which he so pertinaciously asserted had been used by Mr. Longfellow in the production of his Beleaguered City. Mr. Longfellow's poem was written two or three years before the first publication of that by Poe, and it was during a portion of this time in

Stanhurst

'Fable for Critics' 1848

"Then comes Poe with his raven like Barnaby Rudge,  
Three fifths of him genius & two fifths sheer judge,  
Who talks like a book of iambs & pentameters,  
In a way to make people of Commonsense damn metres,  
Who has written some things quite the best of their kind,  
But the heart a 'em' o' wholly squeezed out by the mind,  
Who — but hey day! what's this? Missives Matthews & Poe  
You mustn't fling mudballs at Longfellow so,  
Does it make a man worse that his character's such  
As to make his friends love him (as you think) too much?  
Why, there is not a bard at this moment alive  
More willing than he that his fellows should thrive;  
While you are abusing him thus, even now  
He would help either one of you out of a slough,  
You may say that he's smooth & sleek that till you're hoarse  
But remember that elegance also is force;  
After polishing granite as much as you will,  
The heart keeps its tough old persisting stile,



Expts for Curces; 1878

29 June 1

The great things we talk of all pertaining still,  
After believing friends in much as you will,  
But remember that there is force;  
We may say that he is mortal & old that the world know  
We would not either one of you out of a single.  
With you in showing him there, even now  
When looking them in that his fellow dead things;  
Why, there is not a word in this ancient book  
As to make his firm to love him for your friend, too much?  
Does it make a man more that his character is good  
The more he fling words at his fellow is,  
Who - but happy! what? this? I believe that man is good  
But he looks in 'em a whole squeezed out of the mind,  
Who had written more things quite the best of them kind,  
Or a way to make people of common sense seem better,  
Who talk like a book of words & a few trawlers,  
Then fight of him giving a few fight to his page,  
Then comes on with his own like David's page.

On the 27th April, 1842, Mr. Longfellow again sailed for Europe in search of health. He visited France, England, and Germany, and spent the summer at Boppard, a watering-place on the Rhine. In October he arrived in New York; and his friends — Sumner, Felton, and Howe — went thither to greet him.

Longfellow amused himself on the return voyage by writing some lyrics against slavery. In December these were published in a thin volume entitled "Poems on Slavery."<sup>1</sup> For a long time the opponents of the great guilt of bondage had been lifting up the voice of remonstrance, of entreaty, and of rebuke; circulating tracts and periodicals, and enlisting the pulpit and the press in the cause of the suffering and the dumb. Anti-slavery societies were numerous, and the moral sentiment of the country was actively engaged in the struggle. Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison had already spoken. Channing had allied himself with the cause, Emerson had followed him, Whittier was also coming to the front, and Sumner had spoken with no uncertain sound. It remained now for the poet, whose words had already found a place in the hearts of the people, to strike his first blow.

Since 1836 Mr. Sumner had been urging Longfellow's possession; but it was not printed, I believe, until a few weeks after the appearance of *The Haunted Palace*. 'It would be absurd,' as Poe himself said many times, 'to believe the similarity of these pieces entirely accidental.' This was the first cause of all that malignant criticism which for so many years he carried on against Mr. Longfellow." — *Memoir of Poe*.

<sup>1</sup> *Poems on Slavery*. By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Cambridge: published by John Owen. 1842.

fellow to write some stirring anti-slavery poems. The latter was slow in responding; but, when he did, the former was well satisfied.

The volume included eight poems, of which the most striking, perhaps, are "The Slave's Dream," "The Quadroon Girl," and "The Slave Singing at Midnight." The most prophetic piece in the book is "The Warning," which is here given entire.

"Beware! The Israelite of old, who tore  
The lion in his path, — when, poor and blind,  
He saw the blessed light of heaven no more,  
Shorn of his noble strength, and forced to grind  
In prison, and at last led forth to be  
A pander to Philistine revelry, —

Upon the pillars of the temple laid  
His desperate hands, and in its overthrow  
Destroyed himself, and with him those who made  
A cruel mockery of his sightless woe;  
The poor, blind slave, the scoff and jest of all,  
Expired, and thousands perished in the fall!  
There is a poor, blind Samson in this land,  
Shorn of his strength, and bound in bonds of steel,  
Who may, in some grim revel, raise his hand,  
And shake the pillars of this commonweal,  
Till the vast temple of our liberties  
A shapeless mass of wreck and rubbish lies."

After the publication of the book, Sumner wrote thus to his friend Dr. Lieber: —

"I have sent you Longfellow's poems. I hope you will like them. The volume which you read last year at this time has been translated into German by Freiligrath. The 'Poems on Slavery' are

valuable as contributions to a great cause. There are hearts that will be reached by their melody that have remained deaf to facts, to reasons, and to the exhortations of moralists. He has already received some gratifying expressions from persons who have read them, and been touched by them. Is not the pleasure of a successful poet keener than that of any other person who uses the pen? His words fly over the lips of men, and the poet becomes the dear companion of the beautiful and good and brave. He is not taken down in the solitude of study, but is cherished always and everywhere. His words give consolation, or inspire the mind with a new relish for beauty. In truth, I envy Longfellow the good he has done. To how many bleeding hearts he has come with succor! He has been the good Samaritan to many who have never looked upon him except as transfigured in the written page. You complain that his friends will spoil him by praise. You little know, then, the sternness with which his friends judge his works before they are published.”

The “Poems on Slavery,” notwithstanding that they express intense feeling, are not to be compared with similar effusions from other of our native poets. At the time when they were written, the anti-slavery agitation was, so to speak, in the moral phase: the Republican party was not yet formed, and the final appeal to arms was not to be sounded until twenty years later. Still, Mr. Longfellow dwelt in the very midst of the agitation; and its leaders were among his own personal friends. But he was a man of peace, and he cherished an abhorrence of violence in

word or deed. Though he may never have lacked the moral sympathy with America, yet that sympathy never became with him a flaming fire, as with Mr. Whittier, whose poems on the slavery question are certainly the finest ever written; or a rapier edge, as with Mr. Lowell. In their day they played their part by helping to form the public sentiment. It is to be regretted that so grand a beginning was not followed up to the last, and that the eloquence of his friend Sumner was not accompanied by the poet's muse down through the years until the one great object was accomplished. The scarcity of Longfellow's anti-slavery and patriotic poems, at a time when they were sorely needed, only proves the lack of absolute Americanism in the humanitarian aspect of his verse.



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE PERIOD OF LONGFELLOW'S SECOND MARRIAGE.

*(1843-1846.)*

LONGFELLOW still lived in the south-east chamber at the Craigie House, surrounded by his books and often visited by his friends. In the pages of "Hyperion" we catch a pleasant glimpse of his abode, and of some of the impressions which it forced upon his mind. He says, —

"I sit here at my pleasant chamber-window, and enjoy the balmy air of a bright summer morning, and watch the motions of the golden-robin that sits on its swinging nest on the outermost pendulous branch of yonder elm. The broad meadows and the steel-blue river remind me of the meadows of Unterseen and the river Aar, and beyond them rise magnificent snow-white clouds piled up like Alps. Thus the shades of Washington and William Tell seem to walk together on these Elysian Fields; for it was here, that, in days long gone, our great patriot dwelt; and yonder clouds so much resemble the snowy Alps that they remind me irresistibly of the Swiss noble examples of a high purpose and a fixed will.

"Nothing can be more lovely than these summer mornings, nor than the southern window at which I

sit and write, in this old mansion which is like an Italian villa; but oh, this lassitude, this weariness, when all around me is so bright! I have this morning a singular longing for flowers, — a wish to stroll among the roses and carnations, and inhale their breath, as if it would revive me. I wish I knew the



Longfellow's Chamber at Craigie House.

man who called flowers ‘the fugitive poetry of Nature.’ From this distance, from these scholastic shades, from this leafy, blossoming, and beautiful Cambridge, I stretch forth my hand to grasp his, as the hand of a poet. Yes: this morning I would rather stroll with him among the gay flowers than sit here and write.”

At this period of his life the poet was somewhat closely confined to his professional duties; and he rarely went out of town, except during the season of holidays and vacations. Since his arrival in Cambridge he had invariably visited his old home and friends in Portland at least once a year, usually during the summer; and now and then he would stroll over to New York, where he was always welcomed at the home of Mr. Ward, the father of Mr. Samuel Ward, whose acquaintance he had made in Europe. Here, in 1837, he first met Miss Julia Ward (who in 1843 became the wife of Dr. Samuel G. Howe), whose recollections dating back to this period are interesting. "He was then known," writes this lady, "as the author of 'Outre-Mer,' and had also, I think, published a volume of fugitive pieces and translations. My brother had made his acquaintance in Germany, and had led me to anticipate great pleasure in seeing him. Mr. Longfellow was at that time, and long continued to be, remarkably youthful in his appearance. I remember well his clear, fresh complexion, and the bright chestnut of his hair. I was already deeply interested in the study of German literature; and our talk, as I remember it, was of favorite books and authors."

Although his income as a Harvard professor was exceedingly slender, Mr. Longfellow, in his visits to New York, encountered many temptations to expenditure in the shape of valuable books and engravings; and to these temptations he very often succumbed, always declaring, however, like the vascillating Rip Van Winkle in the play, that it was "for the last time."

During these years also the old friendships grew stronger, and many new ones were formed. Sumner came regularly to spend Saturday night at the Craigie House, and Professor Felton rarely failed to be on hand in time for dinner. With these two genial souls Longfellow spent his happiest moments, "as watchful for their coming as the sweetheart for that of her lover." The "Five of Clubs" still thrived, and held its meetings; but there was a sudden break in its membership. Cleveland, whose health had been gradually failing, died in June, 1843; and his place at the board was now occupied by Samuel G. Howe. Longfellow's visits at Professor Norton's were still kept up; and occasionally he would ride into Boston to dine on a Sunday with Mr. Prescott, — at his father's home in Bedford Street, — who had just brought out his first historical work, the "Ferdinand and Isabella."

But perhaps the greatest attraction for Longfellow was the Mary Ashburton of his delightful romance, — the lady whom he had first met in Switzerland. No passion can be more ardent than that of a man of thirty-five, and no hero could possibly be more gallant than Paul Flemming. Of the story of the new love, only the faintest outline need be recited. Early in the present century Mr. Nathan Appleton, a prominent Boston merchant, married Miss Maria Theresa, daughter of Thomas Gold, Esq., a Pittsfield lawyer, who owned and occupied the fine mansion in Pittsfield, Mass., now the residence of Mrs. Thomas F. Plunkett. Mrs. Appleton was a lady of rare excellence, and impressed many of her graces

of mind and person upon her daughter, Miss Frances Elizabeth Appleton. In 1836, as the reader has already seen, the Appletons travelled on the continent of Europe, where they became acquainted with Professor Longfellow.

Longfellow returned home first; and, in the romance of "Hyperion," he told the story of his love, he being his own hero. After the publication of the book, friends on both sides readily recognized both the hero and the heroine, and quietly conjectured the sequel. It was whispered at the time that the young lady was not a little offended by the affair. Be that as it may, she was not inflexible, nor did she refuse to entertain the new proposal for her hand and heart. It was while Miss Appleton was spending the summer at Pittsfield that both were won; and on July 13, 1843, she became the wife of Professor Longfellow. The happy pair loitered among their friends in Berkshire until towards the last of August, and then returned to Cambridge.

Mr. Sumner at the wedding officiated as "best man." On the 13th August he wrote to Greene, "You will find dear Longfellow married to the beautiful and most lovely Mary Ashburton;" and to Professor Mittermaier of Heidelberg he wrote, "You have heard of the happiness of Longfellow, who is married to a most beautiful lady, possessing every attraction of character and intelligence."

In the following year Mr. Nathan Appleton, having purchased the Craigie estate, presented it to his daughter to be the future home of herself and her poet-husband.



It was during these years that Transcendentalism was running rampant in New England. The tendencies of thought which Emerson had affected had taken a decided form, and had come to full expression in the year 1836, by the publication of Emerson's "Nature," W. H. Furness's little book on "The Gospels," Alcott's first volume of "Conversations on the Gospels," etc.,—all works based on the new spiritual philosophy, and full of criticism of the old religious thought and life. Channing, however, was the real leader of the movement, as he had been twenty years earlier of the Unitarian advance; and his chief counsellor was George Ripley, then a prominent clergyman in Boston. The first meeting of the Transcendental Club was in Boston, at the house of Mr. Ripley, on Sept. 19, 1836; and the persons present were Messrs. Ripley, Emerson, F. H. Hedge, Convers Francis, J. F. Clarke, and A. Bronson Alcott.

In July, 1840, appeared the first number of "The Dial," under the editorship of Margaret Fuller, which, as the organ of the club, enjoyed "an obscurity of four years." In 1841 the Brook-Farm community was established.

Of the Transcendental movement it may be said that Longfellow lived in the very midst of it, but was never a participant. All of its leaders were his cherished friends. Notwithstanding that he, too, was a scholar, and a devoted student of German literature, and that his first important works had stimulated the taste for German studies and the enjoyment of its literature more than any other impulse in this

country, still he remained outside of the charmed circle, serene and friendly and attentive. The careers of other men were moulded by the intellectual revival of that time, but Longfellow's was not. "If," says Mr. Curtis, "Longfellow had been the ductile, echoing, imitative nature that the more ardent disciples of the faith supposed him to be, he would have been absorbed and swept away by the flood. But he was as untouched by it as Charles Lamb by the wars of Napoleon." And this was very much to his own credit.

The indifference of the poet to the Transcendental movement was not wholly gratifying to many of his friends; and, in certain circles, it drew down upon himself some severe denunciations. Margaret Fuller was especially bitter, and in "The New-York Tribune" she published sharp criticisms of both Longfellow and Lowell. The poems of the former she pronounced to be "exotic;" those of the latter, "crude and imitative." Lowell retorted with brilliant sarcasm, Longfellow with good-natured silence. Public sympathy went with them. Viewing the subject at this distance of time and scene, one cannot help thinking that Margaret Fuller was more right than wrong in her criticism, and that both poets profited by what she had ventured to say. It must be remembered, in justice to her, that, later, she was one of the first to recognize the pure and elevating tone of Longfellow's verse, and to defend him against the onslaught of Poe and others.

When Longfellow came home from Europe in 1842, he found the whole country echoing the

praises of Fanny Elssler the *danseuse*. Her marvellous terpsichorean feats carried him back in thought to the land of Castile, and it occurred to him then and there to write a drama. The intention was executed, and resulted in "The Spanish Student."<sup>1</sup> In this poetic drama appeared the song entitled "Serenade," which has since become exceedingly popular, beginning, —

"Stars of the summer night!  
Far in yon azure deeps,  
Hide, hide your golden light!  
She sleeps!  
My lady sleeps!  
Sleeps!"

The work at the time was much sought, and within fifteen years nearly forty thousand copies were sold. The theme was taken from "La Gitanella of Cervantes," and elaborated to the full extent of the author's genius.

The plot of "The Spanish Student" is as follows: Preciosa, the daughter of a Spanish grandee, is, during her infancy, carried off by gypsies. One of these, named Cruzado, adopts her as his own daughter, brings her up as a dancing-girl, and in due time betroths her to Bartolomé, also a gypsy. Living at Madrid is one, Victorian by name, a student of Alcalá, who meets and falls in love with Preciosa. Notwithstanding her caste and questionable character, Victorian resolves to marry her. He has already been betrothed to an heiress in Madrid. Preciosa

<sup>1</sup> The Spanish Student. A play in three acts, by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Cambridge. Published by John Owen, 1843. [12mo, pp. 183.]

is also sought by the Count of Lara, a *roué*; but she rejects him. On a certain night he forces his way into her chamber, and is there seen by Victorian, who, suspecting the fidelity of his mistress, challenges the count to a duel. The duel takes place, and the count's life is spared by Victorian. The count protests his innocence, but boasts of favors received from Preciosa, and shows a ring which she gave him, he says, as a pledge of her love. The ring is a duplicate of one previously given to Preciosa by Victorian. Victorian mistakes it for his own, credits the statements of the count, and abandons the field to his rival. Not long afterwards, while attempting to see Preciosa, the count is assassinated by Bartolomé.

Meanwhile, in his wanderings, Victorian goes to Guadarrama, where he receives a letter from Madrid disclosing to him the treachery practised by the count, and telling that Preciosa is again roaming with the gypsies. He goes in search of her, finds her; and they hold a conversation, during which he spies his ring upon her finger. He offers to purchase it: she refuses to part with it, and a scene takes place which clears up a mystery. A messenger has arrived from court, who gives the first intimation of the true parentage of Preciosa. The lovers depart for Madrid to see the father. On the way Bartolomé appears, fires at Preciosa, is slain by Victorian, and the *dénoûment* is happily ended.

The appearance of "The Spanish Student" furnished fresh fuel for Poe's flaming fire. He began, however, very mildly by saying, "The reputation of

its author as a poet and as a graceful writer of prose is, of course, long and deservedly established; but, as a dramatist, he was unknown before the publication of this play. Upon its original appearance, in 'Graham's Magazine,' the general opinion was greatly in favor,—if not exactly of 'The Spanish Student,'—at all events, of the writer of 'Outre-Mer'; but this general opinion is the most equivocal thing in the world." The writer then proceeded to reprint "some of the finer passages," declared them to be "graceful, well-expressed, imaginative, and altogether replete with the true poetic feeling," and, at last, went on to criticise the remainder.

Poe objected to the preface, and accused Longfellow of a lack of originality. He regretted that "The Spanish Student" was not subtitled "A Dramatic Poem," rather than "A Play;" and asserted, that, "Whatever may be its merits in a poetical view, 'The Spanish Student' could not be endured upon the stage."

He next finds fault with the plot, and thinks that it "looks better in our naked digest than amidst the details which develop only to disfigure it;" and that, in the conception and introduction of the incidents, an utter want of skill, of art, is manifested. He then, at considerable length, endeavors to establish his conclusions on some foundation of reason. He ends by saying, —

"Upon the whole, we regret that Professor Longfellow has written this work, and feel especially vexed that he has committed himself by its republication. Only when regarded as a mere poem can



it be said to have merit of any kind; for, in fact, it is only when we separate the poem from the drama, that the passages we have commended as beautiful can be understood to have beauty. We are not too sure, indeed, that a 'dramatic poem' is not a flat contradiction in terms. At all events, a man of true genius (and such Mr. Longfellow unquestionably is) has no business with these hybrid and paradoxical compositions. Let a poem be a poem only; let a play be a play, and nothing more. As for 'The Spanish Student,' its thesis is unoriginal; its incidents are antique; its plot is no plot; its characters have no character; in short, it is little better than a play upon words to style it 'a play' at all."

In the number of "The North American Review" for July, 1844, among the critical notices appeared a short but appreciative criticism of the literary remains of the late Willis Gaylord Clark, formerly one of the editors of "The Knickerbocker." "All Mr. Clark's friends—and few men have had more or warmer ones—will welcome this volume as a mirror of his mind, of his quaintness, his humor, his pathos, his easy, careless manner, his disregard of conventionalities, and, above all, of his gentle, humane, and generous heart." With this tribute, Longfellow's contributions to the pages of "The North American Review" came to an end.

At the time when Mr. Longfellow was simultaneously performing the duties of a Harvard professor and earning a reputation as a poet, but comparatively few persons in this country were acquainted with the languages of continental Europe, and a still smaller

number, perhaps, were familiar with the poetry of Europe. It was a happy thought which led him to prepare a work within a moderate compass, which should give to the student of poesy a connected view of the poetical literature existing in ten languages, six of these, the Anglo-Saxon, Icelandic, Danish, Swedish, German, and Dutch, belonging to the great Gothic family of the North, and the remaining four, the French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, being daughters of the Latin. The title given to the work was the "Poets and Poetry of Europe."<sup>1</sup>

The plan of the work was original; and, as "the editor's intention was to give as perfect an idea of the poetical literature of modern Europe as could be gained from the rhythmical translations that have been made at divers times by English poets and linguists," Mr. Longfellow drew heavily from the publications of Bowring, Herbert, Costello, Taylor, Jamieson, Brooks, Adamson, Thorpe, and others.

The arrangement of the various excerpts is the distinctive feature of the volume, which is to be regarded more a *collection* than a selection. The translations from each language are brought together chronologically; and prefacing each separate body of specimens is an introductory sketch intended to give "the peculiarities of the languages and of the several epochs into which the literary history of the country is divided." Although short, these sketches are comprehensive. Then follow the translations by various

<sup>1</sup> The Poets and Poetry of Europe, with Introductions and Biographical Notices. By Henry W. Longfellow. Philadelphia: Cary and Hart, 1845. [8vo, pp. 779.]

hands, the extracts from each author being preceded by a biographical and critical notice, written by Professor Felton, "to whose taste and learning the merit of a large portion of what is most original and agreeable in this volume is entirely to be ascribed." Viewed critically, most of the translations are very literal, while others are loose and paraphrastic: many have been worked over into smooth and sounding English verse; while others are mere rough copies, that preserve the sentiment and imagery, but sacrifice entirely the metrical characteristics, of the originals. The former resemble foreign coins that have been melted down, and stamped anew in the English mint: the latter have merely had the foreign marks effaced, and are here presented only as bullion, or rude material, which may afterwards receive a new form and impression, and circulate again as currency.

And now for a hasty view of the contents of the volume, in the order in which they are presented. First come the translated specimens of Anglo-Saxon poetry, consisting of excerpts from "Beowulf," Cædmon's paraphrase of portions of Holy Writ, King Alfred's versions of the metres of Boethius, and a few historic odes and miscellaneous pieces. Then follow specimens from Icelandic poetry. Next Danish poetry, including Longfellow's spirited version of Evald's "King Christian," which has become the national song of Denmark. Attention is then paid to the poets of Sweden. German poetry, as might be expected, occupies a very large part of the volume. But few extracts are given from the poetry of Hol-

land. French poetry is amply illustrated; and so, also, the poetry of Italy, Spain, and Portugal.

Such is a very faint description of the varied and interesting contents of Mr. Longfellow's volume. In the words of one of the early reviewers, "the book abounds with material for the gratification of a cultivated taste, and for the instruction of every mind of a generous and inquiring nature. But it does not admit of abridgment, and the nearest approach to a summary account of it would be to copy its table of contents."

Mr. Longfellow himself contributed many of his own beautiful translations to the volume; and in the great crowd of translations by different persons, certainly a very few, in point of elegance, finish, and fidelity, appear equal to those of our poet. But the work, as a whole, is an honorable memorial of his great attainments as a linguist, rather than as a poet.

In the year 1845 the first collected edition of Mr. Longfellow's poems was published in a superb volume by Messrs. Carey and Hart of Philadelphia. The volume was an octavo, and comprised four hundred and fifteen pages, with eleven illustrations, including a portrait on steel, designed by Huntington and engraved by various American artists. It included several pieces since dropped by the author from later collected editions. In its day the volume was looked upon as a fine specimen of book-making, and it is still remembered with what care the first copies were cherished by Boston booksellers.

In 1845 was published "The Waif: a Collection

of Poems.”<sup>1</sup> Mr. Longfellow was the editor of the collection, though his name was not placed upon the title-page. However, he furnished an introductory poem — “Proem” — for the volume, which bore his signature, and was dated “Cambridge, December, 1844.” The poem is known as “The Day is Done,” and opens, —

“The day is done, and the darkness  
Falls from the wings of Night,  
As a feather is wafted downward  
From an eagle in his flight.

And the night shall be filled with music,  
And the cares, that infest the day,  
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,  
And as silently steal away.”

Mr. Owen suggested the preparation of the volume to the poet, and insisted that the “many stray pieces afloat” should be selected in preference to the productions of well-known English poets. In the book fifty-one poems, mostly lyrical, are inserted: and of these seventeen are anonymous; and the remainder are by Thomas Churchyard, G. P. R. James, Horace Smith, Thomas Pringle, Robert Browning, P. B. Shelley, Mrs. Blackwood, Thomas Hood, Richard Lovelace, Robert Herrick, and others. One piece, entitled “Each in All,” is by Emerson; and there is a “Song for August” by Harriet Martineau. American authorship is but poorly represented. The following stanza from “The Faerie

<sup>1</sup> The Waif: a Collection of Poems. Cambridge. Published by John Owen, 1845. [18mo., pp. 144.]



Queene," which appears upon the title-page of the book, may explain the reason:—

"A waif, the which by fortune came  
Upon your seas, he claimed as property:  
And yet not his, nor his in equity,  
But yours the waif by high prerogative."

Not long after the publication of "The Waif," Poe wrote a criticism on the book, and published it in "The New-York Evening Mirror" of Jan. 14, 1846. He ended by saying,—

"We conclude our notes on 'The Waif' with the observation, that, although full of beauties, it is infected with a *moral taint*,—or is this a mere freak of our own fancy? We shall be pleased if it be so,—but there *does* appear in this little volume a very careful avoidance of all American poets who may be supposed especially to interfere with the claims of Mr. Longfellow. These men Mr. Longfellow can continuously *imitate* (*is* that the word?), and yet never incidentally commend."

In the following year Longfellow brought out a new volume of his poems, including not only those which he had contributed to "Graham's Magazine," "The New World," and other periodicals of that time, but a few new ones hitherto unpublished. The volume bore the title of "The Belfry of Bruges, and other Poems."<sup>1</sup> One of the most notable poems in the book was entitled "The Arsenal at Springfield," which, as Mr. Longfellow once told me, was sug-

<sup>1</sup> The Belfry of Bruges, and other Poems, by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Cambridge. Published by John Owen, 1846.

The Arrow and the Song.

I shot an arrow into the air;  
It fell to earth I knew not where,  
For so swiftly it flew, the sight  
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air;  
It fell to earth I knew not where,  
For who hath sight so keen and strong,  
That it can follow the flight of song

Long, long afterward in an oak  
I found the arrow still unbroke;  
And the song, from beginning to end,  
I found again in the heart of a friend.

Wm. W. Longfellow. Cont. 15. 1869.

good old no wonder, and

sine tali curatio non daretur  
 . curatio non esset tunc ad illud  
 . talis est, talis est p<sup>er</sup> se  
 . talis est, talis est p<sup>er</sup> se

and the other goes a hundred  
yards you will know of it. It  
grows here well as I find that you  
grow it I hope it will be in fruit.

[illegible]

Also we inbroude goed, goed  
aforden alle wate en moet  
. hoe of grinnigd moet, goed en ook  
af en de raad en in wijze. En

gested by reading Mr. Sumner's eloquent address on "The True Grandeur of Nations." The poem was originally printed in "Graham's Magazine" for May, 1845. In the same volume appeared "Seaweed" (first printed in "Graham's Magazine" for May, 1845), and which the poet wrote at Nahant on a quiet summer morning. "The Day is Done" first appeared in "The Waif," under the title of "Proem." The famous "Drinking Song" flashed into the poet's mind one evening while he and Felton were lounging before a wood-fire in the study, quaffing "poet's wine." Another well-known poem, "The Arrow and the Song," was suggested to Mr. Longfellow while strolling through Norton's Woods (so called now) in Cambridge. The stanzas were pencilled as he emerged from the grove, and was slowly wending his way home.

But the poem which above all others in the book has attained a popularity is that entitled "The Old Clock on the Stairs."

"Somewhat back from the village street  
Stands the old-fashioned country-seat.  
Across its antique portico  
Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw;  
And from its station in the hall  
An ancient timepiece says to all, —  
    'Forever — never!  
    Never — forever!'"

The "ancient timepiece" that suggested the writing of this beautiful poem stood at the time in the family mansion of the Appletons at Pittsfield,

Mass. When, in 1853, Mr. Thomas G. Appleton, the son of Nathan Appleton, sold the old home (which originally belonged to his grandfather Gould) to Mr. Plunkett, he insisted that the old clock should not be included in the sale. It was brought to Boston, where it now stands in the hallway of Mr. Appleton's residence. It is in an excellent condition, and as yet bears but few signs of age. Some years ago Mr. Longfellow purchased an old-fashioned clock at a Boston auction, and placed it at the head of the staircase in the Craigie House. From seeing it there, many persons formed the idea that it was the original clock spoken of in the poem; which, of course, is erroneous. All the incidents in the poem occurred in the history of the Appleton family, and the piece was written by Mr. Longfellow while he and his wife were revisiting the old house at Pittsfield.

In 1847 Mr. Longfellow edited a new collection of poems, "The Estray,"<sup>1</sup> which was not unlike "The Waif" in its general character. Both of these books are now very scarce, and are much sought after by bibliomanists.

<sup>1</sup> The Estray: a Collection of Poems. Boston: W. D. Ticknor & Co., 1847. [xiv. 145 pp. 16mo.]





The Old Clock on the Stairs.



## CHAPTER XII.

### “EVANGELINE, A TALE OF ACADIE.”

(1847.)

THE year 1847 witnessed the publication of “*Evangeline, a Tale of Acadie.*”<sup>1</sup> Let us glance first at the circumstances which suggested it, and next at the poem itself.

In the spring of 1755 Massachusetts proposed an expedition against Acadia, or Nova Scotia, which was undertaken and conducted at the expense of the crown. Troops were raised; and in June they arrived in the province, and compelled the surrender of the French forts. These successes, at so early a stage of the war, diffused a general feeling of joy through the colonies, and were welcomed as omens of future good fortune. After the French forts were subdued, the next question to be decided was, what should be done with the Acadians, some thousands in number?

The Acadians were the earliest European occupants of the country, and had dwelt in it then for over two hundred years. Frugal in their habits, and of a mild disposition, their attention had been turned

<sup>1</sup> *Evangeline, a Tale of Acadie.* By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Boston. W. D. Ticknor & Co., 1847. [12mo, pp. 163.]

from hunting and fishing, the delight of their ancestors, to the cultivation of the soil; and by diligent effort they had reclaimed from the forest and the ocean the farms on which they dwelt. By the treaty of Utrecht they had been brought under the dominion of England; but they still loved the language and the usages of their fathers, and the religion of their childhood was graven upon their souls. For forty years they were neglected by the English; and in that time they prospered, and their substance increased. The crops from their fields were exceedingly rich. Flocks and herds grazed in the meadows, or roamed over the hills; domestic fowls abounded; and the thickly clustered villages of neat, thatched-roof cottages sheltered a frugal, happy people. The spinning-wheel and the loom were busily plied; and, from morn to night, matrons and maidens, young men and their sires, toiled for the bread which they ate in peace.

Since the settlement of the English, they had been grievously oppressed. Was their property demanded for the public service? It must be yielded immediately, or "the next courier would bring an order for military execution upon the delinquents." Did they delay in bringing fire-wood at the bidding of their masters? "If they do not do it in proper time," was the harsh mandate of the governor, "the soldiers shall absolutely take their houses for fuel." But what was to be done with the Acadians?

The order went forth from Gov. Lawrence that they should be driven from the homes they loved, and scattered as exiles over the whole breadth of the

continent. The liberty of transmigration was refused. They were to be treated as captives, and as captives they were to be sent out to live among the English. The execution of this sentence, so harsh and vindictive, was allotted to the New-England forces.

To persuade the Acadians to a voluntary exile was seen to be impracticable: artifice, therefore, must be resorted to,—to kidnap and entrap them. A general proclamation ordered all the males of the settlements, “both old and young men, as well as all the lads of ten years of age,” to assemble at the church at Grand-Pré on Friday, at three o’clock in the afternoon, then and there to hear his Majesty’s orders communicated, declaring that no excuse would be admitted on any pretence whatever, “on pain of forfeiting goods and chattels in default of real estate.”

On the appointed day, Sept. 5, 1755, four hundred and eighteen unarmed men assembled in the temple; while, without, their wives, with careworn looks, awaited the issue of the strange conference. The doors were closed, and the sentence was pronounced. “It is his Majesty’s orders,” such were the words, “and they are peremptory, that the whole French inhabitants of these districts be removed. Your lands and tenements, cattle of all kinds, and live-stock of all sorts, are forfeited to the crown, with all your other effects, saving your money and household goods; and you yourselves are to be removed from this province. I shall do every thing in my power that your goods be secured to you, and that



you are not molested in carrying them off; also, that whole families shall go in the same vessel, and that this removal be made as easy as his Majesty's service will admit. And I hope, that, in whatever part of the world you may fall, you may be faithful subjects, a peaceful and happy people. Meanwhile you are the king's prisoners, and will remain in security under the inspection and direction of the troops I have the honor to command."

These words were received with unbroken silence. Then a loud wail of anguish echoed through the aisles and arches of the building. Every heart ached in Grand-Pré that night. No "Angelus" sounded softly at sunset: the "summer of all saints" had lost its beauty. Old men seemed to grow older beneath the cruel sentence; young men looked with dread into the future; mothers clasped their little ones to their hearts, and wept bitterly; and maidens shrank timidly from the embraces of their lovers, and felt the first sorrow of their love.

On the 10th of September the inhabitants of Grand-Pré met for the last time,—in all nineteen hundred and twenty-three souls. The prisoners in the church were drawn up six deep; and the young men, one hundred and forty-one in number, were ordered to march first on board the vessels. With frenzied despair they refused to be separated from their parents and companions, and at the point of the bayonet obedience was enforced. Next, the fathers, one hundred and nine in number, were commanded to embark; and eighty-nine obeyed.

Then, most dreadful of all, mothers and little ones were told they must wait until fresh transports arrived. The bleak month of December came before they left; but where would they find those from whom they had been separated?

Thus dispersed throughout the world, the Acadians became nearly extinct. A few of their descendants still live at the South, but they live to us now chiefly in history. “If this affair,” says a writer, “had occurred on the great theatre of European politics, the names of all who were engaged in it would have been handed down to the execration of posterity. It is like those great acts of pagan cruelty, the results of international hatred,—the reducing of whole communities to slavery, and dividing their lands among the citizens of the conquering nation,—which disgrace the pages of Greek and Roman history. Compared with the partition of Poland, the standing reproach of three of the leading powers of modern Europe, the desolation of Acadia is a crime of much darker dye. The former transferred a nation from their domestic oppressors to a foreign master, probably bettering their condition by the exchange: the latter sunk an innocent people from a state of almost unexampled happiness into the miseries of utter poverty and hopeless exile.”

In his poem Mr. Longfellow selected those circumstances in the history most susceptible of poetical treatment; and, by combining them, he formed a tale of rare beauty, tenderness, and moral power. In the first part of the idyl he pictures the life of the Acadians of the village of Grand-Pré.

“There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the  
sunset  
Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the chim-  
neys,  
Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles  
Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the golden  
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within doors  
Mingled their sound with the whirl of the wheels and the songs  
of the maidens.  
Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the chil-  
dren  
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless  
them.  
Reverend walked he among them; and up rose matrons and  
maidens,  
Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.  
Then came the laborers home from the field, and serenely the  
sun sank  
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the belfry  
Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the village  
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending,  
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and content-  
ment.  
Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers, —  
Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they free  
from  
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of repub-  
lics.  
Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their win-  
dows;  
But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the  
owners;  
There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abun-  
dance.”

The poet then selects one group from this happy village, — that of “Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealth-

iest farmer of Grand-Pré;” and his daughter, the “gentle Evangeline;” and her favored lover, Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith. With the assistance of the notary public, the betrothal of the lovers is formally made. This takes place just before the dawning of the 5th of September.

“Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the table, Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with home-brewed Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in the village of Grand-Pré;

While from his pocket the notary drew his papers and inkhorn, Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of the parties, Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep and in cattle. Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well were completed, And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on the margin. Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on the table Three times the old man’s fee in solid pieces of silver; And the notary rising, and blessing the bride and the bridegroom, Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their welfare. Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed and departed, While in silence the others sat and mused by the fireside, Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of its corner. Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention the old men Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful manœuvre, Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach was made in the king-row.

Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a window’s embrasure,

Sat the lovers, and whispered together, beholding the moon rise Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the meadows. Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven, Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels.

Thus was the evening passed. Anon the bell from the bell-fry Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and straightway

Rose the guests and departed ; and silence reigned in the household.

Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the doorstep  
Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it with gladness.  
Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed on the  
hearth-stone,

And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the farmer.  
Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline followed.  
Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the darkness,  
Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the maiden.  
Silent she passed the hall, and entered the door of her chamber.  
Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white, and its  
clothes-press

Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were carefully  
folded

Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline woven.  
This was the precious dower she would bring to her husband in  
marriage,  
Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill as a  
housewife.

Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow and radiant  
moonlight

Streamed through the windows, and lighted the room, till the  
heart of the maiden

Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous tides of the  
ocean.

Ah ! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she stood with  
Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her chamber !  
Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of the orchard,  
Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her lamp and  
her shadow.

Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feeling of sad-  
ness

Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds in the moon-  
light

Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for a moment.

And, as she gazed from the window, she saw serenely the moon  
pass



Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow her foot-  
steps,  
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered with Ha-  
gar!”

Then the assembling of the old and young men at the church is graphically described, and there the cruel order of his Majesty is made known to them. The evening has come, and the bell of the “Angelus” is sounded.

“Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church Evangeline lingered.

All was silent within; and in vain at the door and the windows  
Stood she, and listened and looked, till, overcome by emotion,  
‘Gabriel!’ cried she aloud with tremulous voice; but no answer  
Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier grave of  
the living.

Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless house of her  
father.

Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board was the supper  
untasted,

Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with phantoms  
of terror.

Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of her chamber.  
In the dead of the night she heard the disconsolate rain fall  
Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-tree by the win-  
dow.

Keenly the lightning flashed; and the voice of the echoing  
thunder

Told her that God was in heaven, and governed the world he  
created!

Then she remembered the tale she had heard of the justice of  
Heaven;

Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully slumbered till  
morning.”

With the destruction of the village and the embarkation of the unhappy prisoners, the first part of the poem closes. Evangeline sees her lover torn from her embrace, and perhaps lost to her forever.

“Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless, the priest and  
the maiden  
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and widened before  
them;  
And as they turned at length to speak to their silent companion,  
Lo! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched abroad on the  
seashore  
Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had departed.  
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the maiden  
Knelt at her father’s side, and wailed aloud in her terror.  
Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head on his bosom.  
Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious slumber;  
And when she woke from the trance, she beheld a multitude  
near her.  
Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully gazing upon  
her,  
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest compassion.  
Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the landscape,  
Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the faces around  
her,  
And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering senses.  
Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the people, —  
‘Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier season  
Brings us again to our homes from the unknown land of our  
exile,  
Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the churchyard.’  
Such were the words of the priest. And there in haste by the  
seaside,  
Having the glare of the burning village for funeral torches,  
But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of Grand-  
Pré.  
And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of sorrow,

Lo ! with a mournful sound, like the voice of a vast congrega-  
tion,

Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with the dirges.  
'Twas the returning tide, that afar from the waste of the ocean,  
With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hurrying  
landward.

Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of embarking :  
And with the ebb of the tide the ships sailed out of the harbor.  
Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the village in  
ruins."

The scene changes in the second part of the poem.  
Many years have now passed since the colonists were  
carried into exile. During all this time Evangeline  
has been wandering in search of Gabriel. At length  
in Louisiana she finds the home of Basil the black-  
smith, who has now become a herdsman.

"Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf of the prai-  
rie,

Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle and stirrups,  
Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet of deerskin.  
Broad and brown was the face that from under the Spanish  
sombrero

Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly look of its master.  
Round about him were numberless herds of kine, that were  
grazing

Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the vapory freshness  
That uprose from the river, and spread itself over the land-  
scape.

Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side, and expanding  
Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast, that resounded  
Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp air of the  
evening.

Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of the cattle  
Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of ocean.

Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing rushed o'er the  
prairie,  
And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in the distance.  
Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through the gate of  
the garden  
Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden advancing to  
meet him.  
Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in amazement, and  
forward  
Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of wonder;  
When they beheld his face, they recognized Basil the black-  
smith.  
Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the garden.  
There in an arbor of roses with endless question and answer  
Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their friendly em-  
braces,  
Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent and thought-  
ful.  
Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not; and now dark doubts and  
misgivings  
Stole o'er the maiden's heart; and Basil, somewhat embar-  
rassed,  
Broke the silence and said, 'If you came by the Atchafalaya,  
How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's boat on the  
bayous?'  
Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a shade passed.  
Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a tremulous accent,  
'Gone? is Gabriel gone?' and, concealing her face on his shoul-  
der,  
All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept and la-  
mented.  
Then the good Basil said,—and his voice grew blithe as he  
said it,—  
'Be of good cheer, my child; it is only to-day he departed.  
Foolish boy! he has left me alone with my herds and my horses.  
Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled, his spirit  
Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet existence.  
Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful ever,

Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his troubles,  
He at length had become so tedious to men and to maidens,  
Tedious even to me, that at length I bethought me, and sent  
him

Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with the Spaniards.  
Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark Mountains,

Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trapping the beaver.  
Therefore be of good cheer; we will follow the fugitive lover;  
He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the streams are  
against him.

Up and away to-morrow, and through the red dew of the morning

We will follow him fast, and bring him back to his prison.”

The next day Evangeline resumes the journey, accompanied by Basil; but they find no trace of Gabriel until they reach the Spanish town of Adayes, which Gabriel had left for the prairies only a few days before. Evangeline arrives at the Jesuit mission, where she remains until the autumn, hoping to meet Gabriel; but again is she disappointed: so the search continues year after year.

“Thus did the long sad years glide on, and in seasons and places

Divers and distant far was seen the wandering maiden;—  
Now in the Tents of Grace of the meek Moravian Missions,  
Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of the army,  
Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and populous cities.  
Like a phantom she came, and passed away unremembered.  
Fair was she and young, when in hope began the long journey;  
Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it ended.  
Each succeeding year stole something away from her beauty,  
Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom and the shadow.



Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of gray o'er her forehead,  
Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly horizon,  
As in the eastern sky the first faint streaks of the morning."

At last Evangeline finds a home among "the children of Penn," and becomes a sister of mercy in Philadelphia. A plague falls upon the city; and day and night Evangeline is in attendance upon the poor in the "almshouse, home of the friendless."

"Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of wonder,  
Still she stood, with her colorless lips apart, while a shudder  
Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the flowerets dropped  
from her fingers,  
And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom of the morning.

Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such terrible anguish,  
That the dying heard it, and started up from their pillows.  
On the pallet before her was stretched the form of an old man.  
Long, and thin, and gray were the locks that shaded his temples;

But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a moment  
Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier manhood;  
So are wont to be changed the faces of those who are dying.  
Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the fever,  
As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had besprinkled its portals,

That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and pass over.  
Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit exhausted  
Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths in the darkness,

Darkness of slumber and death, forever sinking and sinking.  
Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverberations,  
Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that succeeded

Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like,  
‘Gabriel! O my beloved!’ and died away into silence.  
Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his childhood;  
Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them,  
Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and, walking under  
their shadow,  
As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.  
Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids.  
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.  
Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents un-  
uttered  
Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongue  
would have spoken.  
Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,  
Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom  
Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into  
darkness,  
As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,  
All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,  
All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!  
And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,  
Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, ‘Father, I thank  
thee!’”

Such are the outlines of this beautiful and pathetic story, based, as the reader will now perceive, without much exaggeration, upon the historical facts previously cited in this chapter.

In “Evangeline” Mr. Longfellow has managed the hexameter with wonderful skill. “So smooth and easy is the versification,” remarks a critic, “so few are the forced accents in Mr. Longfellow’s hex-

ameters, that persons who have never scanned a Latin heroic have learned to recognize and enjoy the rhythm of 'Evangeline' before they have read the poem through. Pauses and cæsuras and structure are constantly changing; and once in a while a stately and sonorous classic phrase gives a Virgilian compactness to an odd line, and prevents our quite forgetting the foreign descent of the measure Mr. Longfellow has naturalized."

"Evangeline" was written upon a theme which was suggested to Hawthorne by a friend who had heard it from a French Canadian, and by him made over to Mr. Longfellow.<sup>1</sup> When the poem appeared in print, Hawthorne wrote, "I have read 'Evangeline' with more pleasure than it would be decorous to express. It cannot fail, I think, to prove the most triumphant of all your successes."

Hawthorne also wrote a review of the poem, and published it in a Salem newspaper. His admiration drew from the poet the following characteristic reply:—

"MY DEAR HAWTHORNE,—I have been waiting and waiting in the hope of seeing you in Cambridge. I have been meditating upon your letter, and pondering with

<sup>1</sup> "H. L. C.— heard from a French Canadian a story of a young couple in Acadia. On their marriage-day all the men of the province were summoned to assemble in the church to hear a proclamation. When assembled, they were all seized and shipped off to be distributed through New England, among them the new bridegroom. His bride set off in search of him; wandered about New England all her lifetime; and at last, when she was old, she found her bridegroom on his death-bed. The shock was so great that it killed her likewise." (Hawthorne's American Note-Books, Oct. 24, 1839.)

friendly admiration your review of 'Evangeline,' in connection with the subject of which, that is to say, the Acadians, a literary project arises in my mind for you to execute. Perhaps I can pay you back, in part, your own generous gift, by giving you a theme for a story, in return for a theme for a song. It is neither more nor less than the history of the Acadians, after their expulsion, as well as before. Felton has been making some researches in the State archives, and offers to resign the documents into your hands.

"Pray come and see me about it without delay. Come so as to pass a night with us, if possible, this week, if not a day and night.

"Ever sincerely yours,

"HENRY W. LONGFELLOW."

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE PERIOD OF "HIAWATHA."

(1847-1855.)

IN 1849 appeared the least popular of all of Mr. Longfellow's productions. It was entitled "Kavanagh,"<sup>1</sup> and aimed to be a story of New-England life and customs. The tale was written during the previous summer, at the Melville House, not far from the home of Dr. Holmes, in Pittsfield, Mass. Much of the scenery and a little of the story were derived from the author's wooing and marriage.

As already stated, the book never attracted a wide circle of readers; and, at the present time, it is doubtful whether it is ever read by many so-called novel-readers. Nevertheless, the work possesses certain merits, which the able pen of Mr. Lowell has most gracefully portrayed. On the first appearance of the work, he wrote, "It is a story told to us, as it were, while we lie under a tree; and the ear is willing at the same time to take in other sounds. The gurgle of the brook, the rustle of the leaves, even noises of life and toil (if they be distant), such as the rattle of the white-topped wagon, and the regular pulse of the thresher's flail, reconcile themselves

<sup>1</sup> Kavanagh: a Tale. By H. W. Longfellow. Boston, 1849.





Longfellow at Forty-Five



to the main theme, and re-enforce it with a harmonious accompaniment."

Notwithstanding Mr. Lowell's appreciative criticism, the "story," which can scarcely be so termed, is incapable of giving much pleasure to modern readers. There is almost an entire absence of plot, the procrastinating but exceedingly visionary hero tries the patience of even his most charitable admirer, and a want of unity in the arrangement of the incidents of the narrative severely mars the fine touches of local coloring and sweetness imparted to them by the flowing style of the author.

The ill success of "Kavanagh" was partially compensated for by the publication in the following year of a fresh volume of poems, "The Seaside and the Fireside."<sup>1</sup>

The most notable piece in the volume was entitled "The Building of the Ship," one of the most powerful productions of its distinguished author. The first suggestion was revealed to Mr. Longfellow while on a visit to his native State; but the most striking passages in it came later, while he and Mr. Sumner were conversing on certain subjects associated with the political excitement of that period. The "Free-Soil" party, "whose leading policy was free soil, free labor, free speech, free men, and opposition to the extension of slavery and of the slaveholding power, taking the place of the old Liberty party," had just been formed.<sup>2</sup> In Massachusetts,

<sup>1</sup> The Seaside and the Fireside. By H. W. Longfellow. Boston, 1850.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* History of Massachusetts. By the author. pp. 456-461.

conventions and speech-making were the order of the day; and, in the course of events, the Whig party, having lost its vital principle, became a mere faction, and gradually went out of existence as a political power. Its national representative, however, Millard Fillmore, had been inducted into the presidential office, and had, shortly afterwards, signed the infamous "Fugitive Slave Bill," which aroused the spirit of the North. Faneuil Hall never rang with more impassioned eloquence than when, on the 3d of October, 1850, Charles Sumner lifted up his voice in the defence of national honor and the perpetuation of Right.

At such a time, when public indignation rolled forth like a torrent, and the foundation of the government itself seemed to be on the verge of disunion, appeared those majestic verses of the poet, ringing, every word of them, with true patriotism, and falling upon the excited public like oil upon the troubled waters.

"Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!  
Sail on, O UNION, strong and great!  
Humanity with all its fears,  
With all the hopes of future years,  
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!  
We know what Master laid thy keel,  
What Workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,  
Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,  
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,  
In what a forge and what a heat  
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!  
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,  
'Tis of the wave and not the rock;

'Tis but the flapping of the sail,  
And not a rent made by the gale!  
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,  
In spite of false lights on the shore,  
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!  
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,  
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,  
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,  
Are all with thee, — are all with thee!"

Above the sublime eloquence of these verses, the poetic mind of Mr. Longfellow never soared: they carry us back to the early days of the world's history, when the bard was both the inspirer and the priest of the people.

"The Secret of the Sea" was suggested to the poet while sailing down Boston Harbor, as was also "The Lighthouse." In 1849 the poet passed a few days at the old Devereux farm, near Marblehead, and there wrote the oft-quoted poem of "The Fire of Driftwood." The most touching poem in the volume is that entitled "Resignation," which has found a place in thousands of bereaved hearts.

In this year a collected edition of Mr. Longfellow's poems was brought out by special arrangement, in New York, by Messrs. Harper & Brothers.<sup>1</sup> The collection ended with "Evangeline."

Mr. Longfellow's fondness for mediæval subjects showed itself again in the dramatic poem entitled "The Golden Legend," which was published in 1851.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Poems of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow complete in one volume. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1849. (8vo, pp. 146.)

<sup>2</sup> The Golden Legend. By H. W. Longfellow. Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1851.



The design of this production was, to present a series of pictures, illustrating different aspects of life in the Middle Ages. The story, of which only the faintest outline can be given here, is perhaps better suited to a poem, is exceedingly simple, and not without interest.

The time is in the early part of the thirteenth century. A German prince, a student of alchemy, is afflicted with a strange disease which baffles the skill of the ablest physicians. While he is sitting in his tower, bewailing his former happiness, Lucifer in the guise of a travelling physician, comes and assures him that his wonderful catholicon will speedily make him a well man. He at once produces a bottle of the elixir vitæ, of which the prince takes a draught. In consequence of this intercourse with the Devil, the prince is excommunicated from the church, and driven into exile.

“And forth from the chapel-door he went  
Into disgrace and banishment,  
Clothed in a cloak of hodden gray,  
And bearing a wallet, and a bell,  
Whose sound should be a perpetual knell  
To keep all travellers away.”

The prince wanders off to a farm in the Odenwald, where he is kindly received by its humble tenant. Elsie, the eldest daughter of the peasant, having learned that the prince cannot be cured, —

“Unless  
Some maiden, of her own accord,  
Offers her life for that of her lord,  
And is willing to die in his stead,” —

offers to make the sacrifice herself. Lucifer insinuates himself into the village confessional during the absence of the priest, and persuades the prince and the girl's mother to consent to her death. Elsie remains true to her pledge.

“ My life is little,  
Only a cup of water,  
But pure and limpid.  
Take it, O my prince!  
Let it refresh you,  
Let it restore you.  
It is given willingly,  
It is given freely;  
May God bless the gift!”

The prince and Elsie now make a journey to Salerno, where the latter is to make the sacrifice of her life. The various objects and incidents occurring in the journey are graphically described, and occupy a considerable part of the poem. When Salerno is reached, Lucifer again appears in the guise of a priest, and strenuously urges the completion of the sacrifice. Elsie adheres to her determination to die; but, just as she is on the point of executing her purpose, the prince interferes, and saves her life. Touched by her constancy and devotion, he soon after marries her, is cured, and returns home amid great rejoicing.

The portrayal of the character of the peasant-girl is masterly; and in only one other of Mr. Longfellow's creations do we feel more interest, — *Evangeline*. But it must be confessed that the poem is the least read, for the reason, probably, that it is

not included in the popular edition of the poet's works.

At Commencement in 1854 Mr. Longfellow closed his professional labors at Harvard College. For eighteen years he had attended faithfully to his duties as an instructor of young men, and had won their respect and confidence. The students regretted his resignation not less than all the members of the faculty, with whom he had been intimately associated. By his efforts and foresight he had succeeded in raising the department of modern languages to a high degree of eminence; and the reputation of that department had gone over the whole country, and its leading features had been adopted as models in the establishing of similar departments in other American colleges.

But Mr. Longfellow did not leave the college without providing for a worthy successor. At his suggestion, James Russell Lowell, a graduate of Harvard in the class of 1839, and only twelve years the junior of Mr. Longfellow, was elected to fill the vacancy. Thus one poet of renown was followed by another poet of deserving reputation.

In the month of October, 1855, a small 16 mo volume, containing "The Song of Hiawatha," was given to the public. The following full and explicit statement by Mr. Longfellow of the sources from which he had derived the material of his poem was published in a note:—

"This Indian Edda—if I may so call it—is founded on a tradition, prevalent among the North American Indians, of a personage of miraculous birth,

who was sent among them to clear their rivers, forests, and fishing-grounds, and to teach them the arts of peace. He was known among different tribes by the several names of Michabou, Chiabo, Manabozo, Taren-yawagon, and Hiawatha. Mr. Schoolcraft gives an account of him in his 'Algic Researches,' vol. i., p. 134; and in his 'History, Condition, and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States,' Part III. p. 314, may be found the Iroquois form of the tradition, derived from the verbal narrations of an Onondaga chief. Into this old tradition I have woven other curious Indian legends, drawn chiefly from the various and valuable writings of Mr. Schoolcraft, to whom the literary world is greatly indebted for his indefatigable zeal in rescuing from oblivion so much of the legendary lore of the Indians. The scene of the poem is among the Ojibways on the southern shore of Lake Superior, in the region between the Pictured Rocks and the Grand Sable."

It had often been remarked by intelligent people versed in the subject, that the legends and traditions of the Indians of North America merited to be preserved elsewhere than in the prosy volumes of an archæologist. Over and over again the Phi Beta Kappa orators had dwelt on the resources of "boundless prairies and untrodden forests" for poetry; but not yet had any genuine poet come forward to seek out their mysteries, and to weave them into "mellifluous verse." To be sure, Campbell had done a little in this way in his "Gertrude of Wyoming;" Southey had made a complete failure in "Madoc;" and a few other Indian poems had been published.

and were now forgotten. It required courage, and not alone this, but learning, and a combination of the poetical and historical instincts as well, to take up the theme again, and make of it a result altogether successful and worthy of renown.

Mr. Longfellow carried the subject in his mind nearly ten years before he brought it before the public. It was suggested to him in this way. A young gentleman who had graduated from Harvard College in one of those early classes which received so much attention from Professor Longfellow, just after his coming to Cambridge, had returned from the West with his memory well stocked with recent experiences among the Indians. While dining one day with the poet, he very much entertained the latter by a recital of what he had seen and heard during his rambles on the plains, and more especially by repeating some of the legends of camp-fire and lodge, which, as he claimed, were the "folk-lore" of the red men. He very strongly suggested to Mr. Longfellow the pleasurable task of weaving these legends into a poem.

Not long after, Mr. Longfellow began to consider the practicability of acting on the suggestion; and, first of all, he looked about him to learn how much had been attempted and accomplished in this direction. He found, that, in 1839, Mr. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft had published a work entitled "*Algic Researches*,"—a collection of Indian tales and legends, mythologic and allegoric, and, withal, one of its author's finest productions. The legends preserved in this and other of Mr. Schoolcraft's writings

showed the Indians to have possessed unwritten literature of no little value in both a poetical and a humorous sense. There was much delicacy in the conception of many of these tales of the spirits of earth and air, with a genuine quaintness showing an affinity with the fairy stories of the northern races of Europe.

In bringing these curious traditions to light, valuable as an historical index to the character of the tribes, as well as for their invention, Mr. Schoolcraft ought ever to merit and receive the grateful remembrance of the reading portion of the public. He it was who first called attention to this department of our national literature, and, without his poetical interest in the subject, very much of the material which he has preserved would probably have been lost, and, — we speak from knowledge, — the poem of "Hiawatha" would never have been written. "I pored over Mr. Schoolcraft's writings nearly three years," said the poet during one of our conversations, "before I resolved to appropriate something of them to my own use. Having composed nearly five hundred verses, I suddenly changed my mind, and abandoned what I had written. Then I began again, and continued writing to the end. It was not until some time after the publication of the poem that I looked upon it as of much value, and only until I was assured of its appreciation on the part of my critical readers did I begin to realize how much I stood indebted to Mr. Schoolcraft. I was anxious to tell him that I was his largest debtor, and I did so at the earliest opportunity."

A few weeks after the appearance of "Hiawatha,"



the charge was made by a writer in a Washington newspaper that the poet had borrowed "the entire form, spirit, and many of the most striking incidents," of "Kalevala," the great epic poem of the Finns. An English critic went still farther, and affirmed, that "rhymeless trochaic dimeter is commonly used throughout Europe. . . . Mr. Longfellow, in his unalliterated trochaics, may with as little reason be said to imitate the metre of the 'Kalevala,' as Philaethes, in his rhymeless iambic catalectic version of the 'Divina Commedia,' can be asserted to represent the music of Dante." Still another critic, Mr. Ferdinand Freiligrath, summed up the arguments, and said, "I feel perfectly convinced, that, when Mr. Longfellow wrote 'Hiawatha,' the sweet monotony of the trochees of Finland, and not the mellow and melodious fall of those of Spain, vibrated in his soul." Mr. Freiligrath discovered no imitations on the part of the American poet, and surely no one was more competent to do so.

The controversy seemed never to have an end, and for a while critics amused themselves with preferring charges of plagiarism against this latest production of the poet. To none of the attacks did Mr. Longfellow make any open reply, notwithstanding that he was often urged to do so by several of his friends. At length a potent defender entered the field, and forever put an end to the controversy.

In 1856 Mr. Schoolcraft published "The Myth of Hiawatha, and other Oral Legends, Mythologic and Allegoric, of the North American Indians." The following was the letter of dedication:—

"TO PROFESSOR HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

"*Sir*, — Permit me to dedicate to you this volume of Indian myths and legends, derived from the story-telling circle of the native wigwams. That they indicate the possession, by the vesperic tribes, of mental resources of a very characteristic kind, — furnishing, in fact, a new point from which to judge the race and to excite intellectual sympathies, — you have most felicitously shown in your poem of 'Hiawatha.' Not only so, but you have demonstrated, by this pleasing series of pictures of Indian life, sentiment, and invention, that the use of the native lore reveals one of the true sources of our literary independence. Greece and Rome, England and Italy, have so long furnished, if they have not exhausted, the field of poet culture, that it is at least refreshing to find, both in theme and metre, something new.

"Very truly yours,

"HENRY R. SCHOOLCRAFT."

Apropos of this dedication, an able and painstaking writer thus remarks: "It is a very natural remark, that the author who first makes popular a peculiar style or measure must expect to be charged with plagiarism by the ignoramus who makes the wonderful discovery that such style or measure did not originate with the writer through whose agency it became known to him."

The impression made upon the public mind by the appearance of "Hiawatha" was more marked than that of all of his previous efforts. A German critic declared, that "Longfellow's epic is undoubtedly the most considerable poem which has appeared for some years in the English language. Its success has been

unexampled on both sides of the Atlantic. In London the book has been twice reprinted; and, although we ordered it immediately after its publication, we were only able to secure a copy of the fourth edition. It was certainly a happy thought to gather the legends of the tawny aborigines of North America together in a great poem."

"The London Athenæum" said, "The tale itself is beautiful, fanciful, and new; and Longfellow has worked it up into a poem of many parts. . . . He has produced, in an imaginary memoir of the hero, Hiawatha, a picture of Indian life as it exists in the forest and by the river, full of light and color, repose and action. . . . It is beyond all doubt that this 'Song of Hiawatha' will increase Mr. Longfellow's reputation as a singer. The verse, as we have said, and proved by extract, is sweet and simple, is full of local and national color, has a tone and ring of its own: in a word, the story of 'Hiawatha' is the poet's most original production."

"Mr. Longfellow's reputation," said "The London Examiner," "will, we think, be raised by 'The Song of Hiawatha:' it is by far, in our judgment, the most original of all his productions."

A French writer in "The Revue des Deux Mondes" pronounced "Hiawatha" to be "the most finished poem Longfellow has produced." Of the metre he said, —

"The melody of the verse, rapid and monotonous, is like the voice of nature, which never fatigues us, though continually repeating the same sound. Two or three notes compose the whole music of the poem,

melodious and limited as the song of a bird." Describing the general character of "Hiawatha," he says, "The feeling for nature that pervades the poem is at once most refined and most familiar. The poet knows how to give, as a modern, voices to all the inanimate objects of nature; he knows the language of the birds, he understands the murmur of the wind amongst the leaves, he interprets the voices of the running streams; and yet, notwithstanding this poetic subtlety, he never turns aside to minute descriptions, nor attempts to prolong, by reflection, the emotion excited. His poem, made with exquisite art, has thus a double character: it is Homeric from the precision, simplicity, and familiarity of its images, and modern from the vivacity of its impressions, and from the lyrical spirit that breathes in every page."

It was to be expected that a poem, written in such a peculiar measure, would have many imitations and parodies. The most famous of these parodies appeared in "The London Punch," and from it the following selection is here inserted:—

"Should you ask me, what's its nature?  
Ask me, what's the kind of poem?  
Ask me in respectful language,  
Touching your respectful beaver,  
Kicking back your manly hind-leg,  
Like to one who sees his betters;  
I should answer, I should tell you,  
'Tis a poem in this metre,  
And embalming the traditions,  
Fables, rites, and superstitions,  
Legends, charms, and ceremonials

Of the various tribes of Indians,  
From the land of the Ojibways,  
From the land of the Dacotahs,  
From the mountains, moors, and fenlands,  
Where the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gar,  
Finds its sugar in the rushes :  
From the fast-decaying nations,  
Which our gentle Uncle Samuel  
Is improving very smartly,  
From the face of all creation,  
Off the face of all creation.

Should you ask me, by what story,  
By what action, plot, or fiction,  
All these matters are connected ?  
I should answer, I should tell you,  
Go to Bogue and buy the poem,  
Published, neatly, at one shilling,  
Published, sweetly, at five shillings."

So popular soon became the poem among all classes of readers, that ere long the names "Minnehaha" and "Hiawatha" became catch-words. Many new-born lasses were christened from the former, and many an agile bark sailed seaward with the latter flaming in letters of gold from its quarter-deck. In a Boston paper, printed at that time, appears the following local item: "The beautiful three-decked ship 'Minnehaha' — named from the heroine of Longfellow's charming poem of 'Hiawatha,' — was most successfully launched about noon on Saturday last, from Donald McKay's yard at East Boston. The occasion was one of unusual interest, and attracted a very large concourse of people, who rent the air with their huzzas as 'The Minnehaha' gracefully glided into the 'laughing waters,' her namesake."



In a speech delivered by Mr. John Bright at Manchester, England, he commented on the effect of the then late war upon all departments of English effort, and of its influence on the tone of English poetry, and contrasted Tennyson's "War-Lyrics" with Longfellow's "Hiawatha." He said, "I have had the opportunity lately of reading a poem from another country, written by the American poet Longfellow [applause], a poem which treats of the legends of the Indian tribes; and while I have turned from the poem of our poet-laureate, in which I find him descending to slang of almost the grossest character, I turn with delight to the exquisite poem which has come to us from the other side of the Atlantic."

Cardinal Wiseman, in one of his famous lectures, once remarked, "He was a true philosopher who said, 'Let me make the songs of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws.'" He had previously alluded to the absence in English literature of a poet of the people, and went on to say, "There is one writer who approaches nearer than any other to this standard, and he has already gained such a hold on our hearts that it is almost unnecessary for me to mention his name. Our hemisphere cannot claim the honor of having brought him forth; but still he belongs to us, for his works have become as household words wherever the English language is spoken. And whether we are charmed by his imagery, or soothed by his melodious versification, or elevated by the high moral teachings of his pure muse, or follow with sympathizing hearts the wanderings of Evangeline, I am sure that all who hear my voice will



join with me in the tribute I desire to pay to the genius of Longfellow."

But the cardinal, endowed as he seemed often to have been with the gift of prophetic vision, could hardly have foreseen that "Longfellow's poetry would ere long be used by a ruler as an instrument to pacify a people for whom the threatenings of the law had but few terrors." The following incident is worthy of repetition:—

During the free-soil demonstration in Kansas, Acting-Governor Stanton paid a visit to the citizens of Lawrence, where he made a speech on some of the questions then uppermost in the public mind. Some of his remarks failed to accord with the peculiar views cherished by a large proportion of his auditors, who gave token of their disapprobation in the strongest manner possible. At the close of his address, and when it seemed as if a riot was imminent, Mr. Stanton pictured in glowing language the Indian tradition of "Hiawatha," of the peace-pipe, "shaped and fashioned" by "Gitche Manito, the mighty," and by which he "called the tribes of men together," and then continued,—

"I have given you lands to hunt in,  
I have given you streams to fish in,  
I have given you bear and bison,  
I have given you roe and reindeer,  
I have given you brant and beaver,  
Filled the marshes full of wild-fowl,  
Filled the rivers full of fishes;  
Why then are you not contented?  
Why then will you hunt each other?"

I am weary of your quarrels,  
Weary of your wars and bloodshed,  
Weary of your prayers for vengeance,  
Of your wranglings and dissensions;  
All your strength is in your union,  
All your danger is in discord;  
Therefore be at peace henceforward,  
And as brothers live together."

The recital of these stirring lines was more potent for good than the ringing eloquence of the orator, the listening crowd was affected by them, and the mad murmurs that were heard only a few moments before were now supplanted by an involuntary outburst of welcome and applause.

The popularity of "The Song of Hiawatha" is still further attested by its rapid sale at the period of its publication. In less than four weeks, ten thousand copies had been disposed of in this country alone; and up to the first of April, 1857, the sales had been increased to upwards of fifty thousand. I have no means of knowing how many copies were sold in England, as several publishers vied with each other in popularizing the work. Probably the demand for the poem was not less than it was in this country; for on either side of the water there was no poet living at that time, nor since, who made even a distant approach to Longfellow's popularity. By all classes the poet was sought and admired: in the palaces of sovereigns, in the parlors of the rich, in the humble abodes of the poor, might an edition of Longfellow be found. Quotations from the poems were frequently made in the pulpit, in journals, and by public speakers.

"I do not know a more enviable reputation," wrote Miss Mitford in 1851, "than Professor Longfellow has won for himself in this country, — won, too, with a rapidity seldom experienced by our native poets. The terseness of diction and force of thought delight the old, the grace and melody enchant the young, the unaffected and all-pervading piety satisfies the serious, and a certain slight touch of mysticism carries the imaginative reader fairly off his feet."

These words were but the expression of every one who had learned to appreciate the quiet, pensive thought, — the twilight of the mind, in which the little facts of life are saddened in view of their relation to the eternal laws, time, and change, — this is the meditation and mourning of every manly heart, and this is the alluring and permanent charm of Longfellow's poetry.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## YEARS OF ADVERSITY AND TOIL.

*(1855-1869.)*

IT has already been observed that Mr. Longfellow was a generous contributor to the pages of American periodical literature. To "The United-States Literary Gazette," "The New-England Magazine," "The Knickerbocker," "Graham's Magazine," "The New World," and to "Putnam's Magazine," he sent many of his most delightful productions. Not one of these periodicals, however, ever succeeded in winning so much from his pen as did "The Atlantic Monthly," which was established in 1857. The publishers of "The Atlantic Monthly" started off with the determination of enlisting the best efforts of the best writers on the continent. At a dinner given by the publishers, Messrs. Phillips, Sampson, & Co., of Boston, the new idea was discussed; and the assistance of such brain-workers as Longfellow, Holmes, Whittier, Emerson, Prescott, Norton, Quincy, and a host of others, was cheerfully pledged. So notable a literary gathering of minds harmoniously attuned to the necessities of the hour was probably never held in this country. Mr. Lowell was chosen to fill the position of editor-in-chief. For many years afterwards, it continued to be a custom for the staff

of editors and writers to meet at a monthly dinner, which was given usually at "Parker's."

The first poem contributed by Mr. Longfellow to "The Atlantic Monthly" was entitled "Santa Filomena," which appeared in the initial number. From 1854 to 1876 he contributed forty-five poems, all of which have since been gathered into his collected works. From 1876 onwards, his poems appeared with less regularity in the pages of the magazine; and the publishers of other periodicals absorbed several of his best pieces, thus breaking that continuity of attachment which he had always exhibited towards "The Atlantic Monthly."

In the year 1858 Mr. Longfellow published a narrative poem entitled "The Courtship of Miles Standish."<sup>1</sup> Like "Evangeline," it was thoroughly American, and at once became popular. But it cannot be said that it possesses equal merit as a poetical composition. In this poem, as in many others, we discern that Mr. Longfellow's weakness lies not far from his strength; that he felicitously expresses the feelings and thoughts common to all, but does not possess that passion by which supreme lyrists depict the high tides of emotion. He never sings under the irrepressible impulse of some burning affection, some impassioned preference. The same, or nearly the same, may be said of Wordsworth; and that is one reason why he must be held to be essentially feebler, as a lyrist, than such poets as Schiller, Goethe, and Burns.

<sup>1</sup> The Courtship of Miles Standish, and other Poems. By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1858. [16mo, pp. 215.]

Longfellow does not actually go wrong in his treatment of love. His perfect delicacy, his careful and exact observation, keep him from false raptures and affected agonies. But it is one thing not to go wrong in the delineation of love, and another to be positively right. Let us see.

In the poem under consideration, John Alden loves Priscilla, and Priscilla loves John; but they have never said so to each other, and no one knows the state of their feelings. It occurs to Capt. Miles Standish that Priscilla would suit him as a wife; and he asks his friend, John Alden, to propose to her on his behalf. But John does not fancy such a mission, but nevertheless tells the maiden what he has been directed to tell.

“Mute with amazement and sorrow, Priscilla the Puritan maiden  
Looked into Alden’s face, her eyes dilated with wonder,  
Feeling his words like a blow, that stunned her and rendered  
her speechless;

Till at length she exclaimed, interrupting the ominous silence :  
‘If the great Captain of Plymouth is so very eager to wed me,  
Why does he not come himself, and take the trouble to woo me?  
If I am not worth the wooing, I surely am not worth the win-  
ning!’

Then John Alden began explaining and smoothing the matter,  
Making it worse as he went, by saying the Captain was busy, —  
Had no time for such things; — such things! the words grating  
harshly

Fell on the ear of Priscilla; and swift as a flash she made  
answer:

‘Has no time for such things, as you call it, before he is married,  
Would he be likely to find it, or make it, after the wedding?  
That is the way with you men; you don’t understand us, you  
cannot.



When you have made up your minds, after thinking of this  
one and that one,  
Choosing, selecting, rejecting, comparing one with another,  
Then you make known your desire, with abrupt and sudden  
avowal,  
And are offended and hurt, and indignant perhaps, that a  
woman  
Does not respond at once to a love that she never suspected,  
Does not attain at a bound the height to which you have been  
climbing.  
This is not right nor just: for surely a woman's affection  
Is not a thing to be asked for, and had for only the asking.  
When one is truly in love, one not only says it, but shows it.  
Had he but waited a while, had he only showed that he loved me,  
Even this Captain of yours — who knows? — at last might  
have won me,  
Old and rough as he is; but now it never can happen.'

Still John Alden went on, unheeding the words of Priscilla,  
Urging the suit of his friend, explaining, persuading, ex-  
panding;  
Spoke of his courage and skill, and of all his battles in  
Flanders,  
How with the people of God he had chosen to suffer affliction,  
How, in return for his zeal, they had made him Captain of  
Plymouth;  
He was a gentleman born, could trace his pedigree plainly  
Back to Hugh Standish of Duxbury Hall, in Lancashire,  
England,  
Who was the son of Ralph, and the grandson of Thurston de  
Standish;  
Heir unto vast estates, of which he was basely defrauded,  
Still bore the family arms, and had for his crest a cock argent  
Combed and wattled gules, and all the rest of the blazon.  
He was a man of honor, of noble and generous nature;  
Though he was rough, he was kindly; she knew how during  
the winter  
He had attended the sick, with a hand as gentle as woman's;

Somewhat hasty and hot, he could not deny it, and headstrong,  
Stern as a soldier might be, but hearty, and placable always,  
Not to be laughed at and scorned, because he was little of  
stature ;

For he was great of heart, magnanimous, courtly, courageous,  
Any woman in Plymouth, nay, any woman in England,  
Might be happy and proud to be called the wife of Miles  
Standish !

But as he warmed and glowed, in his simple and eloquent  
language,

Quite forgetful of self, and full of the praise of his rival,  
Archly the maiden smiled, and, with eyes overrunning with  
laughter,

Said, in a tremulous voice, ‘ Why don’t you speak for yourself,  
John ? ’

Now, this is very graceful and pretty ; indeed, if it were the prelude to a climax of true passion-painting, it would be unsurpassed. The mistake lies here : the poet cares more for the descriptive portions of his work — in particular, more for Standish’s expedition to the Indian camp — than for the affairs of the two lovers. While it must be confessed that “ The Courtship of Miles Standish ” is Longfellow’s best love-poem, still one is forced to believe that it is not a love-poem of consummate character, when it is contrasted with other love-poems, as, for example, with Goethe’s “ Hermann and Dorothea,” where the love of the hero and heroine draws into its burning heart every other topic in the piece.

Falling short in passion, Mr. Longfellow necessarily failed in the drama ; for, as compared with his lyrical and narrative poetry, his dramatic efforts are of little value. The criticism holds as true to-day as in the year when “ The Spanish Student ” was

published, that he insensibly glides into narrative even when employing dramatic forms; and his heroes and heroines regale each other with elaborate descriptions of mountains and skies. We see the same fault in "The Golden Legend." The character of Elsie is charming, and exhibits the poet at his best; but Lucifer is the most innocent fiend that ever talked platitudes in blank verse.

On the afternoon of Tuesday, July 9, 1861, a sad accident befell Mrs. Longfellow. While she was sitting at her library-table making seals for the entertainment of her two youngest children, a bit of burning wax slipped from her hands and fell into her lap. Immediately her dress, of light gauze texture, caught fire; and the lady was soon enveloped in flames. Mr. Longfellow, at the time, was at work in his study, and heard the piercing cry of his unfortunate wife. Rushing from the room, he picked up a mat or rug, and succeeded in smothering the merciless flames, not, however, before he had himself received serious injuries, and too late to prevent a fatal result.

As soon as possible, Drs. Wyman and Johnson were sent for, and, still later, Dr. Henry J. Bigelow of Boston. Every thing that surgical skill could devise was at once brought into requisition. Both patients were kept under the influence of ether through the night. On Wednesday morning Mrs. Longfellow rallied a little, and the family and friends ventured to hope that the worst might be averted. Not long afterwards, however, a change took place; and at eleven o'clock in the forenoon the gifted and devoted wife was by death released from her suffer-

ing. Mr. Longfellow's injuries were painful but not dangerous.

The death of Mrs. Longfellow was a shock to all who were so fortunate as to be intimate with her. Her rare gifts of intellect, her brilliant and ever amiable manners, her gentle disposition, and her almost queenly grace, had rendered her most dear to all her friends; and she had always been looked upon as the most worthy mistress of the old Craigie mansion. Mr. Longfellow was almost crazed by his bereavement; indeed, the effects of the shock never fully wore away, and caused him to grow old rapidly. And yet he bore his sorrow with a manliness that well befitted the author of "The Psalm of Life." He made his grief wholly personal, and tried, though vainly, to conceal its poignancy beneath his wonted cheerfulness and apparent forgetfulness of self. "I never heard Mr. Longfellow allude more than once to his affliction," said an intimate friend. "We were speaking about Schiller's fine poem, 'The Ring of Polycrates;' and he remarked, 'It was just so with me,—I was too happy. I might fancy the gods envied me, if I could fancy heathen gods.'"

For nearly twenty years the second marriage of Mr. Longfellow was blessed with unalloyed happiness. Five children sprang from the union,—two sons and three daughters. The elder son, Charles Appleton, served as a lieutenant in the First Massachusetts Cavalry during the late American civil war, and was severely wounded in the Mine-run campaign in Virginia, in 1863, and since that time has distinguished himself as an extensive traveller and expert yachts-

man. He is unmarried, and has always made his home with his father at the Craigie House. Ernest Wadsworth, the younger son, married a Cambridge lady, and lives in Cambridge, on Brattle Street. He has achieved a reputation as a painstaking and conscientious artist, and his work is often seen at the art exhibitions. Of the daughters, Alice M. is the eldest, and Annie Allegra is the youngest. Both are scholarly in their tastes, and have accomplished something in the way of literary work. The second daughter is married to Richard H. Dana, 3d, the son of the author of "Two Years Before the Mast." They have two children, — a son and a daughter.

Several years before the death of Mrs. Longfellow, the three daughters of the poet were painted in a group by the late Thomas Buchanan Read, the eminent artist and poet. The picture has been copied by photography, and thousands of impressions have been scattered. In this picture the position of the youngest daughter was such that many persons erroneously got the idea that she was deprived of arms, and not a few ludicrous anecdotes have originated from such a belief. One day Mr. Lowell, while riding in a Cambridge horse-car, overheard one woman repeating to another the story of the armless child. "My dear woman," said the younger poet gently, "you are greatly mistaken. I am an intimate friend of the family, and I know that the facts are not as you represent." The woman showed a little bravado, and replied, with the air of one not willing to be set right, "I have it, sir, from a lady who got it from a member of the family."

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The sad death of Mrs. Longfellow was followed by that of her father, Mr. Nathan Appleton, on the 14th of July. Mr. Appleton was one of the most eminent and successful merchants of the city of Boston. He was born in New Ipswich, N.H., Oct. 6, 1779, and was educated at the academy in his native town. He entered Dartmouth College in 1794, but did not graduate. In 1795 he went to Boston, and, with his brother, founded a prosperous commercial business. He early became satisfied that the time was ripe for the manufacturing of print goods in this country; and accordingly, in company with Patrick T. Jackson and Kirk Boott, he purchased the water-power at Pawtucket Falls, on the Merrimack River, and the land adjacent, on which the city of Lowell now stands. In 1830 Mr. Appleton represented, as the candidate of the tariff party, the Suffolk district of Massachusetts in Congress, and remained through the twenty-second Congress. In 1842 he was also chosen to fill the vacancy in Congress occasioned by the resignation of Mr. Winthrop.

Mr. Appleton amassed a large fortune, of which he made noble use, giving freely to institutions of learning and of charity. He was twice married: first, to Maria Theresa Gould of Pittsfield, Mass., by whom he had four children, — Thomas G., a graduate of Harvard College in 1831, and now a resident of Boston, where he is known as an amateur artist and critic; Mary, who became the wife of Mr. Mackintosh, son of Sir James Mackintosh, governor of one of the British West India islands; Charles S., who died young; and Frances Elizabeth, who became



the wife of Henry W. Longfellow. His first wife died in 1833; and in 1839 he married Harriet C. Sumner, a cousin of Charles Sumner, by whom he had two sons and one daughter.

Several of the poems which Mr. Longfellow published in "The Atlantic Monthly" were, in 1863, gathered together, and printed in a volume bearing the title of "Tales of a Wayside Inn."<sup>1</sup> The series reminds one of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," and now and then a little of "The Decameron." The "inn" where the guests recite their tales of varied worth and interest is an old hostelry, still standing, in Sudbury, Mass., long known as "Howe's Tavern." Hither, for many summers, the story-tellers were wont to resort, seeking a change from the sweltering heat and east winds of Boston and Cambridge. The poet does not give his readers to understand who were these story-tellers, but doubtless many persons have wished to know. The landlord was Lyman Howe of Sudbury; the student, Henry Wales of Boston; the Spanish Jew, Edulei of Boston; the Sicilian, Professor Luigi Monti of Boston; the musician, Ole Bull of Norway; the theologian, Professor Treadwell; and the poet, Thomas William Parsons.

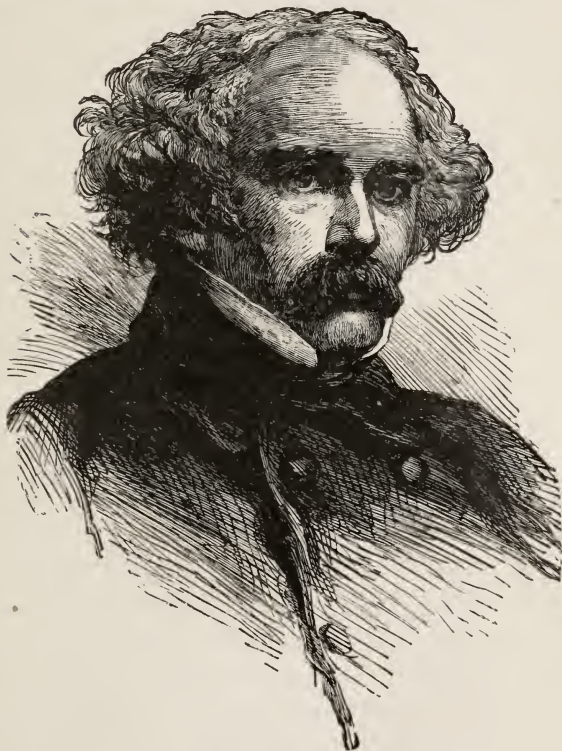
A second series of "Tales of a Wayside Inn" appeared in 1872, and a third in 1873, in the volume entitled "Aftermath."<sup>2</sup> The same scene and characters are maintained through the whole series.

On the 19th of May, 1864, Hawthorne passed

<sup>1</sup> Tales of a Wayside Inn. By Henry W. Longfellow. Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1863.

<sup>2</sup> Aftermath. By Henry W. Longfellow. Boston: Fields, Osgood, & Co., 1873.

from the living. Five days later his remains were borne to Concord and consigned to "Sleepy Hollow," the beautiful cemetery where he had been wont to walk among the pines. On the day of the



Nathaniel Hawthorne.

funeral, Longfellow and Lowell and Holmes, and Emerson and Agassiz and Channing and Pierce, and other friends, assembled to take a last look. Returning home, the poet wrote that beautiful poem, which

one never tires of reading. It is called "Hawthorne," and of it two stanzas must here be given:—

"Now I look back, and meadow, manse, and stream  
 Dimly my thought defines;  
 I only see—a dream within a dream—  
 The hill-top hearsed with pines.

Ah! who shall lift that wand of magic power,  
 And the lost clew regain?  
 The unfinished window in Aladdin's tower  
 Unfinished must remain!"

This poem with others was published in 1864 in a small volume entitled "Flower-de-Luce."<sup>1</sup> The most notable pieces in the collection are "The Bells of Lynn," "Noël," and "Killed at the Ford."

An able writer has said, that when Mr. Browning published "Dramatic Lyrics," or Mr. Tennyson the "Idyls of the King," the title of the book showed to what kind of poetry the author thought its contents belonged. But when Mr. Longfellow brought forward his "New-England Tragedies,"<sup>2</sup> in 1868, his readers at once understood the themes, rather than the poet's manner of unfolding them, from the title alone. These themes, too, were felicitous; and the poet was certainly far enough removed in knowledge and in customs from the periods of the persecutions of the Quakers and of the witchcraft

<sup>1</sup> Flower-de-Luce, and other Poems. By Henry W. Longfellow. Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> The New-England Tragedies. By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. I. John Endicott. II. Giles Corey of the Salem Farms. Boston: Fields, Osgood, & Co., 1868. [12mo, pp. 179.]

delusion, to see and depict the situation without prejudice.

The volume contained two plays of simple structure, and written in language so plain as almost to appear prosy. The first play, entitled "John Endicott," deals with the early persecution of the Quakers in New England with a kindness and fair-mindedness not often exhibited even by our most intelligent historians. He who reads it, in the spirit in which the story is related, will "be gladder for the troubled governor at his escape by death from the bitter warfare of heart and mind than at the escape of the Quakers from merely bodily pain by the ending of the persecution."

"He breathes no more! How bright this signet ring  
Glitters upon his hand, where he has worn it  
Through such long years of trouble, as if Death  
Had given him this memento of affection,  
And whispered in his ear, 'Remember me!'  
How placid and how quiet is his face,  
Now that the struggle and the strife are ended!  
Only the acrid spirit of the times  
Corroded this true steel. Oh, rest in peace,  
Courageous heart! Forever rest in peace!"

In "Giles Corey of the Salem Farms," once the note of genuine tragedy is touched. It is the idea that pride goeth before a fall.

"The Lord hath prospered me. The rising sun  
Shines on my hundred acres and my woods  
As if he loved them. On a morn like this  
I can forgive mine enemies, and thank God  
For all his goodness unto me and mine.

My orchard groans with russets and pearmaines;  
My ripening corn shines golden in the sun;  
My barns are crammed with hay; my cattle thrive;  
The birds sing blithely on the trees around me;  
And blither than the birds my heart within me!  
But Satan still goes up and down the earth;  
And to protect this house from his assaults,  
And keep the powers of darkness from my door,  
This horseshoe will I nail upon the threshold.  
There, ye night-hags and witches that torment  
The neighborhood, ye shall not enter here!"

On the twenty-seventh day of May, 1868, Mr. Longfellow sailed in the steamer "Russia" on a third visit to Europe. Before he left Boston, he was entertained at dinner by a select gathering of friends, among whom were Fields, Whittier, Lowell, and Holmes. The last named read an original poem, which opened as follows:—

"Our poet, who has taught the western breeze  
To waft his songs before him o'er the seas,  
Will find them wheresoe'er his wanderings reach  
Borne on the spreading tide of English speech  
Twin with the rhythmic waves that kiss the farthest beach."

The voyage was a speedy and a pleasant one, and the poet arrived in England about the middle of June. On Tuesday, the 16th inst., during the recitation of the prize exercises at the university of Cambridge, it was proposed to confer the degree of honorary doctor of laws upon Mr. Longfellow. The floor of the Senate House was crowded by all who had the privilege of admittance; and, it being a "scarlet day," a most brilliant display was presented. The undergraduates thronged the galleries, and favored



the poet with a literal triumph. The vice-chancellor presided; and, shortly after two o'clock, Mr. Longfellow entered upon the dais amid cheering from the galleries again and again renewed. There was but very little of the interruption from the galleries that usually takes place on similar occasions. The public orator presented Mr. Longfellow for his degree, a Latin oration was made in honor of the poet, and the latter then received his degree. Afterwards, the poet sat down, and was the cynosure of all eyes till the close of the proceedings.

In commenting on this interesting event, the London "Daily News" said, "It is in its international aspect that we rejoice at the public honor done to Mr. Longfellow. Familiar as his name is in the mouths of the people, among us he represents his country. Such men come among us on unofficial embassies of peace and friendship and good will. Their visits multiply the ties which, as kindred peoples, bind us together. Our tendency is more and more to cultivate our relationship to the progressive and expanding West. Our language, our literature, and our race have a great future here and a great future there. Mr. Longfellow represents the profound unity of sympathy, of home feeling, and of moral aspiration which there is between us. That we can each be represented by the same poet, and feel that the same lyrics express our feelings and move our hearts, is a strong tie of international sympathy."

During his stay in England Mr. Longfellow paid a visit to Stratford-on-Avon, the home of Shak-



speare, and went over the principal places of interest. He received an invitation from the members of the University Club of Edinburgh to dine with them, but was compelled to forego the honor. On July 4 he went to Windsor Castle, and had the honor of an interview with the queen. Later in the day, her Majesty remarked to Theodore Martin (the biographer of Prince Albert), who had come to the castle, "I wished for you this morning, for you would have seen something that would have delighted you as a man of letters. The American poet Longfellow has been here. I noticed an unusual interest among the attendants and servants. I could scarcely credit that they so generally understood who he was. When he took leave, they concealed themselves in places from which they could get a good look at him as he passed. I have since inquired among them, and am surprised and pleased to find that many of his poems are familiar to them. No other distinguished person has come here that has excited so peculiar an interest. Such poets wear a crown that is imperishable."

The following beautiful poem of "Welcome," written by Mr. Charles Kent (not, as commonly reported, by Charles Kingsley), appeared in "The London Times:" —

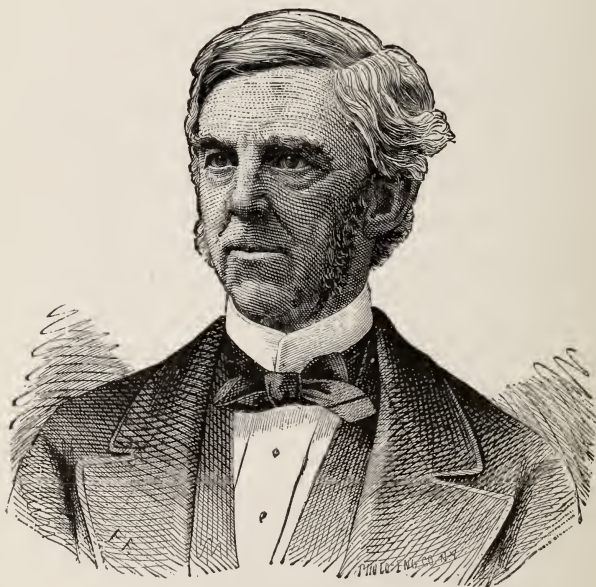
"Welcome to England, thou whose strains prolong  
The glorious bead-roll of our Saxon song:  
Ambassador and pilgrim-bard in one,  
Fresh from thy home, — the home of Washington.  
On hearths as sacred as thine own, here stands  
The loving welcome that thy name commands:

Hearths swept for thee and garnished as a shrine  
By trailing garments of thy muse divine.  
Poet of nature and of nations, know  
Thy fair fame spans the ocean like a bow,  
Born from the rain that falls into each life,  
Kindled by dreams with loveliest fancies rife :  
A radiant arch that with prismatic dyes  
Links the two worlds, its keystone in the skies."

It would serve no useful purpose to enumerate all the honors that were lavishly showered upon the poet. For nearly two months it was an endless round of *fêtes* and dinner-parties, receptions by learned societies, and holiday excursions. Towards the middle of July, Mr. Longfellow visited Tennyson at the Isle of Wight, and was most handsomely entertained. Soon afterwards he left England to spend the remainder of the summer on the borders of the Lake of Como. From thence he went down into Italy, where he passed the winter and the spring. On returning from Italy, Mr. Longfellow again made a brief stay in England; and in July, 1869, he was at the university of Oxford, where he received the degree of J.C.D. On the 31st of August he returned home to this country.

While Mr. Longfellow was in England, an absurd story, concocted by some idle gossipier, gained currency both here and abroad. It was to the effect, that, on the occasion of an earlier visit in England, Mr. Longfellow had called at Knebworth, bearing a letter of introduction to Lord Lytton, then Sir Edward Bulwer, and by the latter had been most insultingly treated. The printed canard was for-

warded to Lord Lytton, who at once wrote a communication to the newspapers, in which he pronounced it "an impudent falsehood from beginning to end." Characterized by the same lack of veracity were the pretty but foolish stories which a female writer in this country circulated, some years ago, relative to Mr. Longfellow's reception at Windsor Castle. The queen gave the poet a generous welcome, but in no wise compromised the dignity of her station.



Oliver Wendell Holmes.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE TRANSLATION OF DANTE.

(1867.)

ON the 6th of September, 1867, George Ticknor wrote to his Majesty, John, King of Saxony, as follows : —

“One work, which of late has much interested me, I took the liberty of sending a few days ago to your Majesty, as something you may not be sorry to see. It is the translation of ‘The Divina Commedia,’ recently published here by our well-known poet, Longfellow. He has been many years employed on it, —above five and twenty within my knowledge, —imposing upon himself all the time such rigorous conditions, that I wonder he has been able to do it at all. For he has rendered the whole poem absolutely line for line, making each line express exactly what belongs to the corresponding line in the original, —not a particle more, not a particle less. In this he has been more severe with himself than any translator of Dante known to me, —more, even, than your Majesty has been.”

Mr. Longfellow began his translation of Dante during the early years of his Harvard professorship. The task was easily suggested to him by his practice of reading Dante to his classes; and many of the

notes which he promulgated to them, and which were carefully taken down by the students in their note-books, are still retained, almost as originally given, in the poet's translation. Mr. Ward has given us a pleasant reminiscence of the way in which Longfellow began and carried on his version. For many years, a few minutes in the early morning, while the poet was waiting for his coffee to boil, comprised all the time in the day that was allotted to the work, which thus went on, "line upon line," until the whole was completed. Then it became necessary to revise the sheets, which was accomplished with the aid and counsel of many friends. Just how this was done is disclosed by the following interesting communication written by Mr. J. H. A. Bone of Cleveland, O. It so forcibly delineates the charming features of the "Cabinet Councils," that it is here reproduced entire.

"In January, 1867, I was at Cambridge, Mass., spending some days as the invited guest of Professor James Russell Lowell at his pleasant home of Elmwood. The daylight hours were mostly passed in delving for literary, historical, and philological facts among the mass of valuable materials in the Harvard-College library, and the evenings in talks, continuing far into the night, before the bright wood-fire in Professor Lowell's home library, on topics suggested by the day's work, or by the books on the open shelves around us.

"The presence among these of a number of volumes relating to Dante turned the conversation one evening to the subject of a new translation of 'The



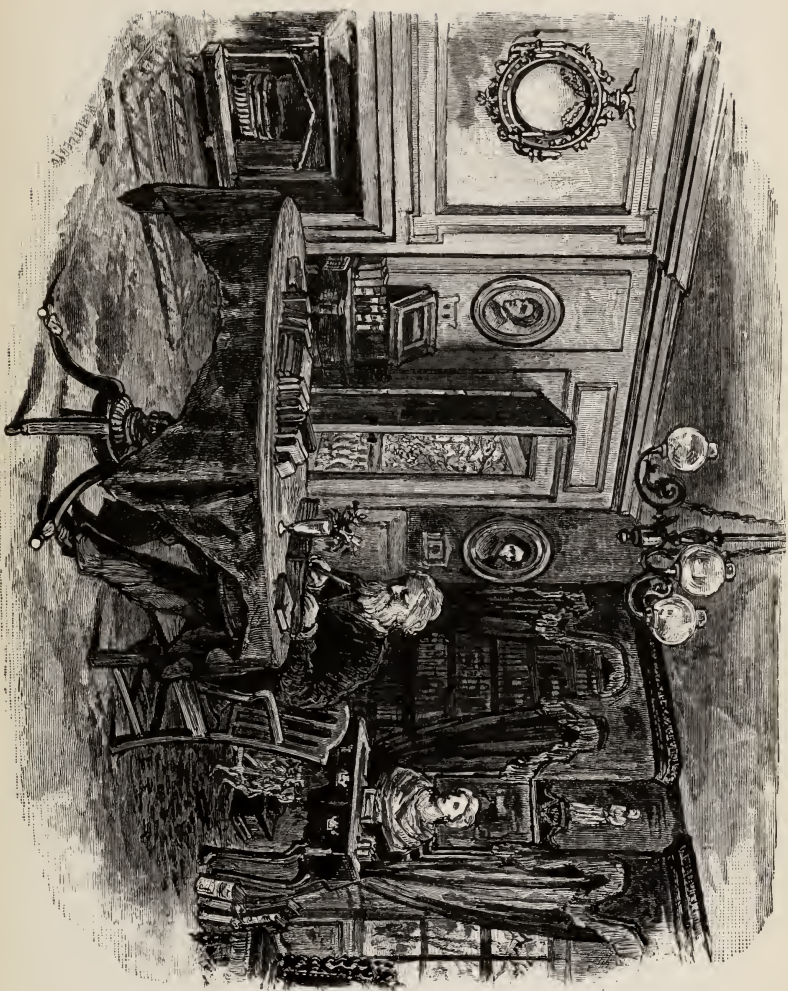
Divine Comedy,' upon which I knew Longfellow had been for some time engaged, and which Mr. Fields had told me a few days before would probably be published within a few months. Professor Lowell said he had himself, years before, conceived the idea of translating Dante's great work, and had begun a collection of Dantean literature for that purpose, but had abandoned it when he learned that his friend Longfellow had formed the serious purpose of performing the work. Mr. Charles Eliot Norton, one of the finest of Dantean scholars, had also relinquished a partially formed purpose of the same character, and had now turned his attention to the translation of Dante's 'New Life,' which, it may be remarked in passing, was published later in the same year. Professor Lowell said that all the Danteans of Cambridge recognized the superior fitness of Longfellow for the task, and had cordially given him assistance and counsel when asked, feeling pride in the work. On the other hand, Professor Longfellow was equally cordial and frank in inviting their aid; and it had been a custom during many months for the select circle of Danteans to meet at Longfellow's house on Wednesday evenings to listen to the poet's reading of his translation as it progressed, and to make suggestions concerning it. The final revision of the proof-sheets was then going on, and the Wednesday evenings were devoted to the last 'Cabinet Councils' on them before they were dismissed for publication.

"To my delight, the next day brought me a pleasant invitation from Professor Longfellow to accom-



pany Professor Lowell to the Dante gathering that evening, and to attend these meetings as long as I remained at Cambridge. It was, of course, accepted, and in the evening we walked through the snow to the well-known Longfellow home, and were met at the door by the poet himself, who had from the window seen us approaching. It is hardly necessary to repeat the description of Longfellow's appearance, and his kindly courtesy of manner, which has become familiar to every one. He was then approaching his sixtieth birthday, but his white hair and beard gave him a patriarchal appearance more in keeping with twenty years greater age. That was, however, the only sign of advanced years. His complexion was fresh, his eyes softly bright, and his manner so courteous and winning, that the question of real or apparent age was at once forgotten. The visitor felt himself at ease immediately, as if he had always belonged to the inner circle of the poet's friends; and the secret of the strong affection felt toward Longfellow by his literary neighbors — and some might think rivals — was explained.

“After a few minutes' pleasant conversation in the poet's well-appointed study, James T. Fields, the poet's publisher, and who was also a poet-publisher, walked briskly up the snowy path from the old-fashioned gateway, and was warmly greeted. William D. Howells, then assistant editor of ‘The Atlantic Monthly,’ and a great favorite with both the older Cambridge poets, quickly followed. There was a lively conversation for a short time, a remark



Longfellow's Study from 1844



concerning the unusual absence of Charles Eliot Norton, — ‘snowed in,’ some one suggested, — and then Longfellow, glancing at the clock, said ‘School-time!’ Each of the visitors was handed a copy of Dante in the original, with which to follow the translation as read from the printed sheets. I pleaded my insufficient acquaintance with the Italian, but the ‘schoolmaster’ would not let me off thus. ‘All scholars must work,’ said Longfellow; and he handed me a volume containing a prose literal translation, with the injunction that any marked difference in the rendering of a word or construing the sense of a passage must be noted, if a doubt as to its propriety arose. Then all settled down to close study.

“As a preliminary, Longfellow took from a drawer the sheets which had been passed upon at the previous meeting, and on which he had noted the suggestions, objections, and doubts of the ‘scholars’ made at that time. These had all been carefully considered, some amendments accepted, others rejected, and the doubtful passages thoroughly examined. Where the translator still preferred his own rendition to that suggested by his critics, he gave his reasons for that action. This done, the sheets were replaced, the new set taken up, and the poet began reading the lines slowly, and at the same time watchful of any indication of dissent or doubt on the part of his hearers.

“The reading commenced with Canto XIII. of the ‘Inferno,’ where Dante and his guide enter the marvellous wood.

“Not foliage green, but of a dusky color,  
Not branches smooth, but gnarled and intertangled,  
Not apple-trees were there, but thorns with poison.’

“The reading continued without interruption until the thirtieth line was reached.

“‘Therefore the Master said, “If thou break off  
Some little spray from any of those trees,  
The thoughts thou hast will wholly be made vain.’

“The last line is one of the well-known difficulties of the translators of Dante. In the original it stands, —

“‘Se tu tronchi  
Qualche frascetta d’una d’este piante,  
Li pensier ch’ hai si faran tutti monchi.’

“Cary renders it thus: —

“‘If thou lop off  
A single twig from one of those ill plants  
The thought thou hast conceived shall vanish quite.’

“It is thought the passage remains imperfect and defective in the original text, hence the difficulty of translation. Longfellow appeared to be not quite satisfied with his rendering, and invited suggestions of improvement; but these were hesitatingly given. All the suggested emendations were noted for after consideration, and the reading continued. Sometimes one of the listeners checked the reader to interpose a question or a doubt; at other times the poet himself stopped to explain the reason for his selection of a word. In either case discussion generally followed, authorities were examined and cited; and after all the information obtainable had been



brought out, and the net result noted on the margin of the proof, the reading was resumed.

“One stop was at the incident of the shades of the unfortunate Lano of Sienna and Jacopo of San Andrea rushing through the ghastly wood, chased by ‘black she-mastiffs, ravenous, and swift of foot as greyhounds who are issuing from the chain,’ the ghosts —

“‘Naked and scratched, fleeing so furiously

That of the forest every fan they broke.

He who was in the advance, “Now, help, Death, help!”

“A question was raised as to the exact meaning in that connection of ‘*accorri*.’ Dante says the foremost of the fleeing shapes cried, ‘*Ora accorri, accorri morte*.’ Cary, with some other translators, renders the word in its sense of haste.

“‘Haste now,’ the foremost cried, ‘now haste thee, Death!’

“After some discussion, Longfellow’s choice of meaning was approved, and the line retained without change. The fourteenth canto was read with fewer interruptions. One of these was at the passage describing the rain of fire upon the naked spirits stretched or crouched upon the burning sand.

“‘Thus was descending the eternal heat,

Whereby the sand was set on fire, like tinder

Beneath the steel, for doubling of the dole.’

“One of the listeners looked up quickly as if to offer a remark, but immediately returned to the open book. Longfellow noticed the movement, and interpreted its meaning. ‘I prefer “dole” to “suffering,” “sorrow,” or “sadness,”’ he said, ‘because it is more



poetic in this place, as well as better expressing the exact shade of meaning. A poet's license might well be pleaded for such a word,' he added with a smile; 'although our friends, the dictionary-makers, mark it as obsolete.'

"'Tennyson uses the word,' I ventured to remark.

"'Tennyson restores to literature many words that are under the ban of the dictionary-makers as obsolete,' said Fields; 'and the use to which he puts them justifies the act. In this case the alliterative euphony of "doubling of the dole" would warrant stretching a point in the translation if that were necessary. But the propriety of adopting the word is to me even more apparent in the opening lines of the third canto. How perfectly the lines —

"'Per me si va nella citta dolente,  
Per me si va nell' eterno dolore  
Per me si va tra la perduta gente" —

are rendered by

"'Through me the way is to the city dolent;  
Through me the way is to eternal dole;  
Through me the way among the people lost;"

and how poor as well as how unliteral Cary's version, —

"'Through me you pass into the city of woe;  
Though me you pass into eternal pain;  
Through me among the people lost for aye."

"'Dole, in the sense of pain, mental suffering, sadness, or sorrow,' remarked Lowell, 'was a frequently used and expressive word in the hands of Chaucer and Spenser and their contemporaries, and

did not disappear until after Shakspeare's time. The dramatist Ford used 'dolent' in the sense of sad and sorrowful in his play of 'Perkin Warbeck,' where the 'passionate duke,' after a mishap, is spoken of as 'effeminately dolent.'

"At the end of the fourteenth canto Longfellow dropped the last sheet into an open drawer, and rising, with a light laugh, said, 'Now, gentlemen, school is over; and we will have some refreshment after our labors.' The books were closed; and the 'scholars' adjourned to the dining-room, where a supper, charmingly served, was in waiting. One or two other guests joined the circle; and for about an hour there was a lively interchange of pleasant chat, piquant remarks, and gossipy anecdotes. The host of the evening was not talkative, but was attentive to every one, and had the tact to keep the conversation lively and general. Mr. Fields had brought some interesting bits of publishers' gossip out from Boston with him, which afforded material for comment and pleasant raillery. A chance allusion to some literary work in progress or contemplation by Mr. Howells brought out graceful compliments from both Longfellow and Lowell, of which any young writer might well be proud. Mr. Longfellow inquired the authorship of a recent paper in 'The Atlantic;' and, upon being told by Fields that it was a young writer of New-York City, he was strongly urged by Lowell to 'make much of him,' as he saw in his work evidence of much promise. Fields made a semi-humorous complaint that Lowell, as editor of 'The North American Review,' had savagely cut up a

biography of an eminent author by one not so eminent, that Fields had recently published. Lowell retorted, in equally good-natured banter, that Fields deserved no consideration ; for he knew better than to publish a book which was not only poor in itself, but pernicious in that it stood in the way of a better work on the subject being made hereafter. Fields put it to the company whether it was treating a publisher fairly to make his own periodical destroy the value of a book published by himself. ‘I assure you,’ he exclaimed in a humorously aggrieved tone, ‘that from the day Lowell’s article appeared, not a single copy of the book has been sold. I arraign Lowell as a murderer, for he completely killed the “Life.”’

“‘It died a-borning, and I but hammered the nails into its coffin,’ replied Lowell ; and a general laugh followed, one of the heartiest laughers being the publisher.

“Before the repast was ended, one of Longfellow’s sons came in, a slim young fellow, full of boyish vivacity and ready talk. It was pleasant to note the attention paid by the father to his account of what he had been doing, and how he had enjoyed himself during the visit from which he had just returned, and the interest manifested by questions he put to draw the young man out.

“All pleasures come to an end at some time. The guests rose, prepared themselves for the wintry night air ; and after a warm hand-clasp, and cordial invitation to repeat the evening’s experience, each took his homeward way. In my case it was towards Elmwood, where, in front of the bright fire of blazing

logs on the library-hearth, I sat until nearly one o'clock in the morning, discussing Dante and his translators, past and present, or rather listening in absorbed attention to the talk on the subject by Professor Lowell, as he smoked his pipe.

"Three or four months later the first volume of 'The Divine Comedy,' containing the 'Inferno,' was published; and I prepared a review of it. A marked copy was sent to the publishers, as customary. Very soon after, I was both surprised and gratified by the receipt of the following letter, which is given exactly as written, with the peculiarity of punctuation of the original:—

CAMBRIDGE, May 14, 1867.

MY DEAR SIR, I have had the pleasure of receiving the Cleveland Herald containing your most friendly and sympathetic notice of my translation of the Divine Comedy, and I hasten to thank you for your great kindness.

The notice is excellent, bringing forward just the points I should wish to have touched upon. It is positive and not negative; and will not fail to do the work much good.

It is difficult to thank one for praise; so let me thank you rather for telling your readers what I have tried to do, and how far, in your opinion, I have succeeded.

Our pleasant Wednesday evenings are now ended, for the present at least; but I hope in the autumn, on some pretext or other, we shall begin again; and that we may once more have the pleasure of seeing you among us.

Lowell is well; and we are urging him to take up the Canzoni, which I really hope he will do.

With great regard

Yours truly

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

J. H. A. BONE, Esq.

The translation was published in three volumes in 1867, by Ticknor and Fields of Boston. In the same year, Professor Norton published his version of Dante's "*Vita Nuova*," and Mr. T. W. Parsons his translation of the "*Inferno*." Mr. Longfellow's work was hailed with admiration by all scholars, and both at home and abroad was regarded the best translation of Dante in the English language. In Cambridge, the home of the poet, it suggested the organization of a Dante society, — the first, I believe, on this continent. The first meeting was held on Feb. 11, 1881; and, at a later meeting, Mr. Longfellow was chosen president. He accepted the honor on condition that no duties should be imposed upon him. The main object of the Dante Society is, to establish at Harvard College a collection of Dantesque literature; and one of the minor objects is, to translate such works of Dante as have not already appeared in English. The membership of the society numbers about fifty.



## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE LAST TEN YEARS.

(1871-1881.)

VERY much like "The Last Tournament," of Mr. Tennyson, Mr. Longfellow's "Divine Tragedy,"<sup>1</sup> published in 1871, is part of a series of poems. It was the poet's idea to write a dramatic trilogy, of which "The Divine Tragedy" was to be the first part, "The Golden Legend" was to be the second part, and "The New-England Tragedies" the concluding part. Of the last two parts of the trilogy mention has been previously made in this work; and little more remains to be said of them, except to remark, that, in the light of "The Divine Tragedy," they seem to gain new force and meaning.

As regards "The Divine Tragedy," it is simply the life of Christ told by a poet in blank verse very nearly in the words of the evangelists. Perhaps most persons would prefer the simple gospel narrative to the poetic re-arrangement of the same, which is truly not much of an improvement over the former, albeit that it is characterized by much grace, and is not wanting in reverence. A critic, who I presume is Mr. Howells, has written, "The reader,

<sup>1</sup> The Divine Tragedy. By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co. 1871. [8vo, pp. 313.]

looking back upon the poem, will be more apt to do it justice than at the first glance. The simplicity will probably have seemed bare at times; and the self-denial which has rejected from the dramatic narrative all non-scriptural persons and incidents, and has so sparingly relieved the gospel history by the invention of the interludes, may have been felt as too severe. A better sense of the poet's intention ought to remove these impressions; and revision will light up the many points at which it touches the life of the time, such as Pilate's Roman mystification at the strange religion of the Jews, and his pagan surprise at their intolerance. . . . There is a peculiar unrest in the poem, which lets it dwell upon no fact with extraordinary fulness: it hastens forward to the most tragic of all tragic ends. You must turn back, as we have said, for its true effects; and in this review you will most enjoy the tender and vivid passages in it."

In 1872 "The New-England Tragedies," "The Golden Legend," and "The Divine Tragedy" were published in one volume, under the title of "Christus, a Mystery." For some unexplained reason, the publishers have never included these productions in the popular and complete edition of Longfellow's poems.

In his "Three Books of Song,"<sup>1</sup> which came out in the summer of 1872, Mr. Longfellow again appeared at his best. The volume contained, among other pieces, the second series of "Tales of a Wayside Inn," which in many respects were fully as

<sup>1</sup> Three Books of Song. By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Boston: James R. Osgood & Co. 1872. [16 mo, pp. 204.]

readable as the first series. In "The Legend Beautiful" one finds a most exquisite embodiment of the poet's religious sense, and it is impossible to read it without feeling one's self drawn more and more closely in sympathy with its author. There is not, in fact, a single piece in the volume which is not thoroughly gifted with a charm, such as generations of readers have learned to expect from whatever Mr. Longfellow chose to write: color, harmony, simplicity, sweetness, beauty,—all of these qualities pervade the pages of what one is tempted to pronounce the best book of the poet's declining years.

During the summer of 1873, Mr. Longfellow, accompanied by Charles Sumner, paid his first visit to the old Longfellow homestead in Newbury, Mass. He went thither from Nahant, where, since about 1850, he was accustomed to pass the heated summer months. After viewing the spot, the two friends were the guests of Ben: Perley Poore, at his home at Indian Hill; and, when lunch was over with, they were given a ride to Amesbury, where they hoped to see Mr. Whittier. Strange as it may seem, the poets, although cherishing for each other the kindest regards, rarely met. As far back as 1845, however, they had become acquainted. Fortunately Mr. Whittier was at home, and in his simple, easy, and unaffected manner, received his visitors most kindly. During the hour, Mr. Whittier exhibited an anti-slavery document which he had signed forty years before; and this led to a pleasant conversation in regard to what the three men had done to advance the cause of the slave.

In the autumn of 1873 the volume called "Aftermath"<sup>1</sup> was published. It contained Part Third of "The Tales of a Wayside Inn," which, like the earlier series, were simply stories, teaching by incident and character, and often not teaching at all. The volume also contained a few shorter poems, many of which had previously appeared in "The Atlantic Monthly." One of the most striking of these, because full of feeling, was that entitled "Changed." If possible, however, that called "Aftermath" was more lovely. It reads as follows:—

“ When the summer fields are mown,  
When the birds are fledged and flown,  
And the dry leaves strew the path;  
With the falling of the snow,  
With the cawing of the crow,  
Once again the fields we mow  
And gather in the aftermath.

Not the sweet, new grass with flowers  
Is this harvesting of ours;  
Not the upland clover-bloom;  
But the rowen mixed with weeds,  
Tangled tufts from marsh and meads,  
Where the poppy drops its seeds  
In the silence and the gloom.”

Something of the spirit and movement apparent in several of Mr. Longfellow's earlier poems are reproduced in "The Challenge," "The Haunted Chamber," and "The Meeting." Of the tales, that called "Scanderbeg," told by the Spanish Jew, and "The Rhyme of Sir Christopher," told by the land-

<sup>1</sup> Aftermath. By H. W. Longfellow. Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co. 1873.

lord, are thoroughly in the style of their author. The theologian's tale, called "Elizabeth," is probably the most enjoyable in the book.

In 1874 appeared "The Hanging of the Crane,"<sup>1</sup> a poem which was suggested to Mr. Longfellow by the old French custom of placing that now obsolete contrivance in the kitchen chimney of a young couple at their house-warming. But the poem "is really a pensive imagination of the life that expands with the family table, as the children come, one after another, to demand its enlargement, and that contracts as they grow up and pass one by one out of the old home, till the father and mother sit at last as they sat at first, and face each other across the table alone."

This poem originally graced the columns of "The New-York Ledger," from whose editor, we are told by Mr. Samuel Ward, Mr. Longfellow received four thousand dollars. In this case, evidently, the poet's name was more thought of than the poet's work; for "The Hanging of the Crane" is neither one of Mr. Longfellow's best, nor is it a great poem at all. Like the "Children," it abounds in just those qualities which please the popular mind, however; and even if one cannot confess to finding much of the true poetic feeling in the stanzas, one is somehow greatly captivated by the strains of alternate playfulness and sadness which are delicately interwoven into them. Perhaps a single word will best characterize the production, — sweetness.

<sup>1</sup> The Hanging of the Crane. By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. With illustrations. Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co. 1874.



In the following year this poem re-appeared in a new volume entitled "The Masque of Pandora."<sup>1</sup> The poem which gave the title to the book is rather a poetic drama, which in 1880 Miss Blanche Roosevelt proposed to Mr. Longfellow to have produced upon the stage. The poem was then recast; a score was written by Mr. Alfred Cellier; a company was organized, of which Miss Roosevelt assumed the leading *rôle*; and the piece was put upon the stage in Boston, in January, 1880. The enterprise proved a complete failure, as all good judges had predicted, from the utter lack of attraction in the play itself, and the mediocre ability of those who took part in it. It was said at the time that Mr. Longfellow was considerably out of pocket by the transaction.

In the same volume was printed the poem "Mortui Salutamus," several minor poems, and fourteen sonnets. Of the sonnets, those entitled "Three Friends of Mine" are undoubtedly the finest. They refer to Sumner, Felton, and Agassiz. Says a graceful critic, "There are few more touching lines in all literature than those that close the sonnet to Charles Sumner: —

" 'Thou hast but taken thy lamp and gone to bed;  
I stay a little longer, as one stays  
To cover up the embers that still burn.'"

"Longfellow is wonderful in these homely felicities: reproach him as you please for excessive harmoniousness, — a swan overladen with song, — there

<sup>1</sup> The Masque of Pandora, and other Poems. By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co. 1875. [16 mo, pp. 146.]

### Columbus. (Schiller)

Steer, bold marines, on! albeit nillings aside either  
And the steersman drop idly his hand at the helm,  
Ever, ever so Westward! there must the coast be discovered;

If it but lie distinct, imminent lie in thy mind.  
Trust to the God that leads thee, and follow the sea that is silent;  
Did it not yet exist, now would it rise from the flood.

Nature with Genius stands united in league everlasting,  
What is promised by one, surely the other performs.





*H. C. Agassiz*





is a spiritual sweetness that penetrates like the odor of aloe-wood, a richness as of ambergris, a reverence for things holy and absent, that is not so much unction as awe." <sup>1</sup>

The "Five of Clubs" had ceased to exist, and one by one the friends of Longfellow's early manhood were passing away. Felton, who in 1860 had become president of Harvard University, died at Chester, Penn., in February, 1862. He it was whom Longfellow thus addresses in one of those masterly sonnets, entitled "Three Friends of Mine: " —

"Oh, what hadst thou to do with cruel Death,  
Who wast so full of life, or Death with thee,  
That thou shouldst die before thou hadst grown old!"

On Dec. 14, 1873, Professor Agassiz died at Cambridge. Probably no other one man, except Hugh Miller, had done more to popularize science; and no other teacher had trained so many young and rising naturalists. Agassiz was not only a scientific thinker, but still more a scientific force; and in his personal intercourse he invariably inspired all with a love of knowledge for the sake of knowledge. Longfellow mourned the death of his friend with a sorrowful heart: the departure left a void which could not be filled by another.

"Ah! why shouldst thou be dead, when common men  
Are busy with their trivial affairs,  
Having and holding? Why, when thou hadst read  
Nature's mysterious manuscript, and then  
Wast ready to reveal the truth it bears,  
Why art thou silent? Why shouldst thou be dead?"

<sup>1</sup> Professor J. A. Harrison of the University of Virginia.

In the following year death came and took away still another friend, the one most loved and most tenderly welcomed at the poet's home, — Charles



Charles Sumner.

Sumner, who died at Washington on March 11, 1874.

“Good-night! good-night! as we so oft have said  
Beneath this roof at midnight, in the days  
That are no more, and shall no more return.”

At the time of his decease, Mr. Sumner was employing his spare hours in the preparation of a complete edition of his works, which had been in course

of publication since 1870.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Sumner lived long enough to see nine volumes in print; and the remainder of the work was carried on by his literary executors, Messrs. H. W. Longfellow, F. V. Balch, and E. L. Pierce, in conjunction with Mr. Owen and Mr. George Nichols, both of Cambridge. Messrs. Lee and Shepard of Boston are the publishers of this monumental enterprise, which will easily take rank with the most superb series of books of modern times. The series is now completed in fifteen elegant crown octavo volumes, and comprises Mr. Sumner's orations, senatorial addresses, letters and papers through his entire public career, from July, 1845, until the period of his death. The matter is arranged chronologically, and with the author's latest revisions. No literary enterprise probably ever passed through more careful and conscientious supervision, and no grander monument was ever reared to the memory of a true and noble man.

In the summer of 1875, all but two of the surviving members of the Bowdoin class of 1825—eleven in all—again met at Brunswick, to celebrate the semi-centennial of the class. Mr. Longfellow was present, and read his marvellous poem, "*Morituri Salutamus*,"—"perhaps the grandest hymn to age that was ever written." The poem was read in the church meeting-house, before a large audience. "Though we are at present apart," wrote Dr. Shepley afterwards, "and months have elapsed, we often seem to ourselves, even now, as when we were gathered

<sup>1</sup> The Works of Charles Sumner. In 15 volumes. Boston: Lee & Shepard. 1870-1882.

about him, to be still standing listening to the words of his greeting, —

“And now, my classmates; ye remaining few  
That number not the half of those we knew,  
Ye, against whose familiar names not yet  
The fatal asterisk of death is set, —

And with thanks we accept, as for our use especially,  
lines kindly furnished, and made free for the use of  
all: —

“Be that sad year, O poet, very far  
That proves thee mortal by the little star.  
Yet since thy thoughts live daily in our own,  
And leave no heart to weep or smile alone,  
Since they are rooted in our souls, and so  
Will live forever, whither those shall go,  
Though some late asterisk may mark thy name,  
It never will be set against thy fame,  
For the world's fervent love and praise of thee  
Have starred it first with immortality.”

Before leaving for their respective homes, the small band of classmates gathered in a retired room of the college for the last time, “talked together a half-hour as of old, agreed to exchange photographs, and prayed together.” And then came the separation and farewells.

In 1875, with the assistance of John Owen, Mr. Longfellow began to edit a collection of poems, to which was given the title of “Poems of Places.”<sup>1</sup> Although the collection is one of the best ever made, and well deserves a place in every library, the public did not take to it; and the sale of the books was very meagre.

Many persons have doubtless observed that each

<sup>1</sup> Poems of Places. 31 volumes. Edited by H. W. Longfellow. Boston: James R. Osgood & Co. 1876-79.

succeeding volume of Mr. Longfellow affords evidences of greater simplicity in his art than the preceding volumes. In no sense could the term "exotic" be reasonably applied to his later productions, which are invariably characterized by a degree



James Russell Lowell.

of freshness almost surprising. In the volume which he published in 1877<sup>1</sup> were included a fifth flight of "Birds of Passage," sixteen poems in all, and among them the beautiful tribute to James Russell Lowell,

<sup>1</sup> *Keramos, and other Poems.* Boston. 1877.



entitled "The Herons of Elmwood," a second book of sonnets, and fifteen translations. The longest piece in the volume bore the title of "Keramos;"



Longfellow Jug.

and the leading idea of it had been lurking in his mind for many years, — far back to his early days in Portland. At the time when the poem appeared, the public were awakening to an increased sense and

interest in the fictile art; and it was singularly opportune that Mr. Longfellow should also evince a lively sympathy with the æsthetic mood. The poem is perfectly natural in its lines and contours; and, after reading it, one feels that he has been listening to a connoisseur's rapturous praises without being bored by his critical tediousness in describing qualities and characteristics.



Longfellow Jug.

It was this beautiful production which gave rise to the now famous "Longfellow Jug," the story of which is interesting. For many a day Mr. Richard Briggs, the well-known



Elmwood. — James Russell Lowell's Home.





Boston dealer in pottery ware, had desired to make something of this sort; so, when the poem was first published, Mr. Briggs went personally to England, to the celebrated works of Josiah Wedgwood & Sons, in Staffordshire, and commissioned them to make a "Longfellow Jug" in Wedgwood ware.

It is about seven inches in height, and is broad, stout, and capacious. It holds, when filled to the brim, about five pints; has an honest handle; and is, of course, of the usual color of Wedgwood ware. The accompanying pictures describe it much better than words. The jug exhibits two panels, one presenting a most admirable portrait of Mr. Longfellow, and the other the following familiar verse from the poem:—

"Turn, turn, my wheel! turn round and round  
Without a pause, without a sound:  
So spins the flying world away!  
This clay, well mixed with marl and sand,  
Follows the motion of my hand:  
For some must follow, and some command,  
Though all are made of clay!"

One is tempted to say of the portrait, that it is one of the best, if not the best, that has been made of the poet. The remaining decorations of the jug comprise scrolls intertwined with flowers, on which are imprinted the titles of some of Mr. Longfellow's most popular poems: "The Golden Legend," "Hiawatha," "Evangeline," "Psalm of Life," etc. As a specimen of art production, the jug is certainly one of the most beautiful and desirable, and will immensely please all lovers of Mr. Longfellow's poetry.

The poet himself knew nothing of the affair until he received the jug itself. He then wrote the following characteristic letter to Mr. Briggs, which thus completes the story:—

CAMBRIDGE, Dec 30, 1880.

MY DEAR SIR, — Please accept my thanks for the handsome specimen of Wedgwood ware you have been kind enough to send me, and for the compliment you pay me in having had my portrait placed upon it, with some lines of mine and titles of my poems.

This is a very pleasant and very welcome New-Year's gift; and you have kept your secret so well, that I have been taken quite by surprise.

I beg to assure you that I value very highly this mark of your consideration and regard.

I am, my dear sir,

Yours very truly,

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

On the 27th of February, 1879, the occasion of the seventy-second birthday of the poet, the children of Cambridge presented him with an arm-chair, made from the wood of the old horse-chestnut tree, made famous in the poem of "The Village Blacksmith." The design of the chair is admirable, the color is of a jet black, and the upholstering is in green leather. The back of the chair is carved to represent horse-chestnut leaves and blossoms, and the same style of decoration appears at other points. Around the seat, in raised German text, are the following lines:—



The Children's Chair.





“And children coming home from school  
Look in at the open door:  
They love to see the flaming forge,  
And hear the bellows roar,  
And catch the burning sparks that fly  
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.”

A brass plate beneath the cushion bears the following inscription: “To the author of ‘The Village Blacksmith,’ this chair, made from the wood of the spreading chestnut-tree, is presented as an expression of grateful regard and veneration by the children of Cambridge, who with their friends join in the best wishes and congratulations on this anniversary. Feb. 27, 1879.”

That tender and touching poem, entitled “From My Arm-chair,” was Mr. Longfellow’s response of gratitude to his young friends. The last verses are far too beautiful not to be given here.

“And thus, dear children, have ye made for me  
This day a jubilee,  
And to my more than threescore years and ten  
Brought back my youth again.

The heart hath its own memory, like the mind,  
And in it are enshrined  
The precious keepsakes, into which is wrought  
The giver’s loving thought.

Only your love and your remembrance could  
Give life to this dead wood,  
And make these branches, leafless now so long,  
Blossom again in song.”

## CHAPTER XVII.

## LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH.

*(1877-1882.)*

IMMEDIATELY after the death of Professor Agassiz, in December, 1873, Mr. Longfellow's health began to decline. While his geniality of heart and his buoyant spirits never failed him, it was plainly evident to all who came in contact with him that he was slowly losing ground, and that his once robust and hardy constitution was being undermined. From the shock occasioned by the loss of his beloved friend, he never fully recovered. Still, so well did he conceal his sorrow and his increasing infirmity, only those who were in daily intercourse with him were perhaps aware of his precarious condition. For several years previous, he had been a victim of neuralgia; and this affliction had caused him great suffering. Thenceforth this malady attacked him more frequently, with narrower intervals of cessation; and occasionally he would have an onset of vertigo, or dizziness, which would sometimes last for several successive days. As the years crept on, he was seen in the streets of Cambridge less often than formerly: he rarely visited any place of amusement, and never except on some special occasion. On a fair day,

when the air was balmy, he would stroll off on a short walk; and then it was that many of his fellow-citizens would remark that the poet was surely failing, for his unsteady gait, his anxious step, and his changed features, were apparent. One could never forget the first and saddest blow which had been dealt to his trusting and devoted heart, nor those after-griefs, the taking away of his dearest friends and counsellors, that had also happened to mar his happiness. We felt for him as we feel only towards a brother: he had our deepest and most heart-felt sympathy, and we made his sorrow our own. How often, as we beheld him threading his way along some quiet by-path, absorbed in his own meditations, have those sombre lines forced themselves upon the mind:—

“Into the Silent Land!

Ah! who shall lead us thither?

Clouds in the evening sky more darkly gather,  
And shattered wrecks lie thicker on the strand.”

In 1880 appeared the last volume of poems prepared by Mr. Longfellow. It bore the significant title, “Ultima Thule.”<sup>1</sup> It contained, among other gems, the poem entitled “The Iron Pen,” relating to a pen presented to the poet by Miss Hamlin of Maine. Not less beautiful are the sonnet poems. The pen was made from a fetter of Bonnivard, the prisoner of Chillon, the handle of wood from the frigate “Constitution,” and bound with a circlet of gold, inset with three precious stones from Siberia, Ceylon, and Maine.

<sup>1</sup> Ultima Thule. Boston: 1880. Houghton, Mifflin, & Co.

Dec. 28, 1880, was the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the settlement of Cambridge. It was celebrated by the people and school-children of the city. At the exercises held in Sanders Theatre Mr. Longfellow and Dr. O. W. Holmes were present, and received a genuine ovation. It was the former's last appearance in public. At the close of the exercises, the children crowded around their friend, and besought him to write his name in their albums. It was a most amusing spectacle, but the patience of the poet was inexhaustible. Over and over again he wrote his autograph; and then, when he could write no longer, he requested all who had not received his signature to come to his home, and he would there favor them. Mr. Longfellow also spoke to the children the following brief but beautiful address:—

“MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,—I do not rise to make an address to you, but to excuse myself from making one. I know the proverb says, that he who excuses himself accuses himself,—and I am willing on this occasion to accuse myself; for I feel very much as I suppose some of you do when you are suddenly called upon in your classroom, and are obliged to say that you are not prepared. I am glad to see your faces and to hear your voices. I am glad to have this opportunity of thanking you in prose, as I have already done in verse, for the beautiful present you made me some two years ago. Perhaps some of you have forgotten it, but I have not: and I am afraid, yes, I am afraid, that fifty years hence, when you celebrate the three hundredth anniversary of this occasion, this day and all that

belongs to it will have passed from your memory ; for an English philosopher has said, that the ideas as well as children of our youth often die before us, and our minds represent to us those tombs to which we are approaching, where, though the brass and marble remain, yet the inscriptions are effaced by time, and the imagery moulders away."

During the summer of 1881, it became apparent to his family and friends that the physical condition of Mr. Longfellow was such as to give cause for alarm. Increasing sickness added its burden rapidly to the weight of his nearly fourscore years. His walks in the streets were gradually diminished in number, and from this time forth he was frequently admonished by his physician to be guarded in whatever bore on the problem of his health. When the winter season came on, he began to fail even more rapidly ; and for the first time in his life he was obliged to excuse himself to the many callers at his home. For nearly half a century, the old Craigie House had been the frame of the poet's life and the workshop of his genius ; and from thence volume after volume of verses had gone forth to find their way to the hearts of men from Hudson's Bay to the shores of Australia. Across the threshold of its homely portal had passed in and out thousands of strangers, and yet, perhaps, all of them friends ; and invariably had they been received with the warmest welcome. Never under that historical roof-tree had the cold shoulder been turned, even upon the individual who came to impose on the good nature of the host. Never had the door been closed to man, woman, or child.

But now, alas! the times were changed. Tired nature demanded rest, even against the will of the sufferer. Nothing pained him so much as to be under the necessity of excusing himself from his friends, and more than once he remarked that it seemed a terrible discourtesy. To one who called to see him, not many days before his going from our midst, but was not allowed an interview, Mr. Longfellow thus wrote:—

“I am sorry that I could not have had the pleasure of seeing you when you did me the honor to call upon me. But I know you will excuse my inability, when I assure you that I am a great sufferer at the present time. I know not whether I shall pull through, but I have as much hope as had the old bishop of Salamanca.”

And to another friend he writes,—

“I am fit for nothing just now, not even to complain. But I am trying to make the most of my idleness—shall I call it delicious?—which the present condition of my health imposes upon me.”

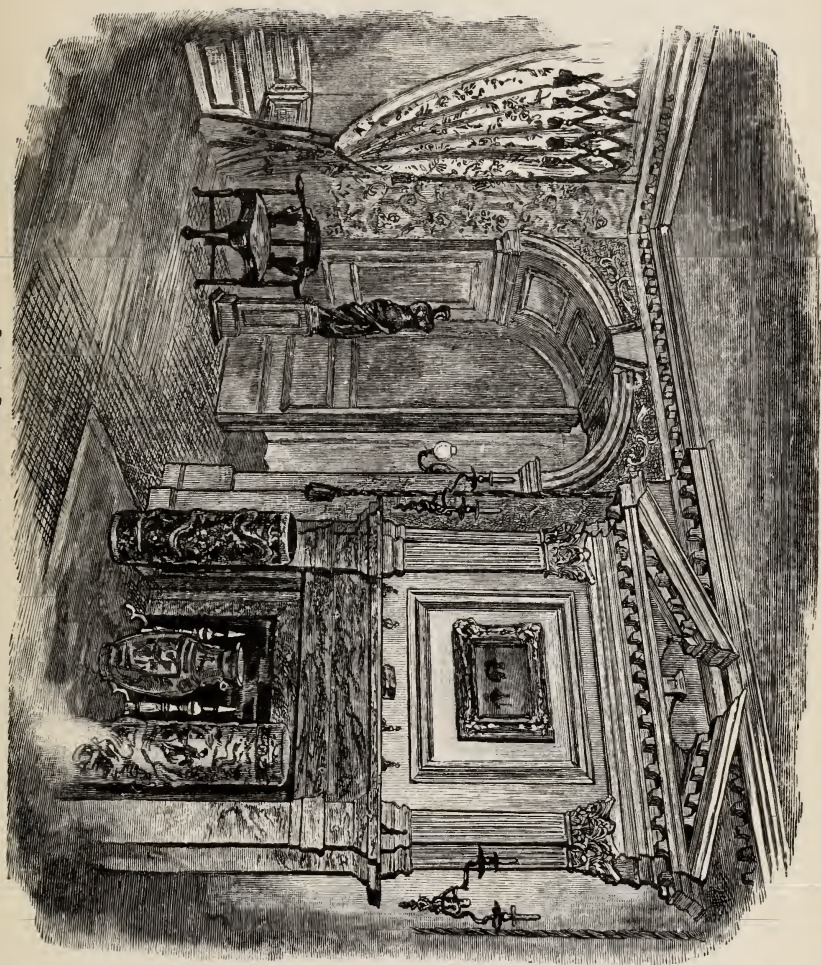
In mid-winter I sent to the poet by messenger another old ballad on “Lovewell’s Fight;” and in the note which accompanied it I ventured the suggestion that perhaps it might be the one which we had been seeking some years before, for it contained the verses which the poet had always carried in his memory, namely,—

“‘I’ll kill you, Chamberlain,’ quoth he,  
‘And scalp you when you’re dead.’”

A few days later came the poet’s response, written on the back of a card, and accompanied by a



Drawing-Room at the Longfellow House.





small volume which he wished me to examine. It reads as follows:—

“Not yet. But you are indefatigable, and I know that you will find it. When you next write to L——, assure him that I have not forgotten his kindness.”<sup>1</sup>

Feb. 27, 1882, the seventy-fifth birthday of the poet was generally celebrated all over the country. The children of the public schools took a large part in these exercises, and appeared to vie with their elders in the desire to honor the occasion. In Portland the whole people took the matter in hand to tender a public reception to Mr. Longfellow. The following correspondence was passed.

PORTLAND, Jan. 10, 1882.

MY DEAR SIR, — It is my great pleasure to enclose to you a copy of the resolve passed unanimously by our city council. It needs no assurance on my part that it will be very gratifying to your numerous friends in Portland to greet you on the occasion. The reception proposed is to be plain and simple. The details to be in a manner agreeable to yourself.

Hoping to receive an early reply of acceptance,

I am, most respectfully yours,

WILLIAM SENTER, *Mayor*.

PROFESSOR H. W. LONGFELLOW.

<sup>1</sup> Allusion is here made to Mr. Lewis of Fryeburg, Me., who kindly sent me some years ago a poem on the Lovewell Fight, which I gave to Mr. Longfellow. The latter once told me that he had an idea of writing another poem on the subject. I observe, that, in a recently published *brochure*, Mr. Lewis publishes what he declares to be the long-lost ballad which Longfellow wrote in his early days. But it is *not* the poem.

CAMBRIDGE, Jan. 12, 1882.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter with its enclosed copy of the resolutions of the city authorities of Portland in reference to my seventy-fifth birthday. I hasten to thank you and them for the honor conferred upon me. I hardly need assure you, my dear sir, that this mark of consideration from my native city is very gratifying to me, and regret extremely, that, on account of ill-health, I am forced to decline the public reception offered me. My physician prescribed absolute rest; and I do not see any chance of my being able to go to Portland in February, so slow is recovery from nervous prostration.

I am, my dear sir, with great regard,

Yours faithfully,

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

On account of Mr. Longfellow's inability to be present, the celebration was abandoned by the city authorities. Afterwards, a meeting of the Maine Historical Society was called, at which it was decided to honor the day by appropriate exercises. At the hour appointed for the exercises, in the evening of the 27th, a large audience had gathered. In the absence of the president, Hon. W. G. Barrows of Brunswick, the vice-president of the society, presided, and opened the meeting by a suitable introductory address. On motion, the following telegram was sent to the poet:—

PORTLAND, Feb. 27.

To H. W. LONGFELLOW, *Cambridge, Mass.*

The members of the Maine Historical Society, assembled with friends in honor of your seventy-fifth birthday, send greetings and congratulations.

The following reply was soon received : —

CAMBRIDGE, Feb. 27.

H. W. BRYANT, *Recording Secretary*.

Your telegram received. I return cordial thanks to the members of the society, and am grateful for this signal mark of their remembrance and regard.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

The exercises consisted of a poem, entitled "Laus Laureati," by James P. Baxter, Esq., of Portland, and interesting historical papers by Rev. H. S. Burrage and E. H. Elwell, Esq., and Hon. George F. Talbot of Portland, and Hon. William Goold of Windham, and Professor A. S. Packard, D.D., of Brunswick. Altogether, the occasion was one long to be remembered, and worthy of all who labored to insure its success.

The fierce winds of March had begun to blow over the meadows along the Charles; and, as the clouds of dust arose on every hand, the poet looked out of his study-windows, and queried whether it were safe to pay one more visit to that friend of his childhood and of his old age,— Mr. John Owen. For many years back, the poet and his faithful "J. O." had treasured in mind the recurring anniversaries of the birthdays of each other. These anniversaries were always remembered by the bestowal of some little token of their love and friendship; and the time intervening each year between the birthdays was by the friends called their "honeymoon," for then they could say that they were of the same age.

It was while he was looking out of the window,



on one of the surly, blustering days of the early March, that the poet bethought him again of the pleasant anniversary which he had himself just passed, and of that forthcoming anniversary, which, if it should please God, he so much wished to celebrate with his friend. It yet lacked about three weeks before the 28th of March, and on that day Mr. Owen would have reached his seventy-sixth birthday. It was not a long look ahead; and yet the poet, as if foreseeing something that was about to happen, chose to prepare for the event instead of waiting for its coming. On that same day he sent to Mr. Owen a few presents, — he knew what would be most appreciated, — and among them a bottle of Falernian, or poet's wine. On the label, written in ink, was the familiar inscription, — "H. W. L. to J. O." It was the poet's intention to send to his friend a sonnet before the month should end; but, alas! the opportunity and the inspiration never came.

On Saturday, the 18th of March, Mr. Longfellow received his last visitors, two Boston lads, who came to Cambridge by the express invitation of the poet. On their arrival at the Craigie House, they were treated in the most kindly spirit, were shown all the objects of interest; and finally each bore away in his little album the autograph of their friend, and the friend of all children. The recollection of that visit will ever be treasured by the boys.

After his child-visitors had gone, the poet allowed himself to take a brief stroll on the piazza. It was quite late in the afternoon, and before many minutes had elapsed he observed that the rawness of the



atmosphere was affecting him with chilliness. On going into the house, he complained a little of feeling cold, but added that he should probably feel better shortly. While he was at dinner, his condition grew worse; and he arose and went to his room, where shortly afterwards he was seized with a violent attack of vertigo. This was accompanied or followed by vomiting, which so alarmed the members of the family that it was thought best to summon Dr. Morrill Wyman. During the evening Mr. Longfellow complained bitterly of severe pains in the abdomen, and it was deemed necessary to administer opiates in order to allay the discomfort and to induce sleep.

During Sunday marked signs of improvement were manifested; and it was assumed that the poet was no longer in danger, providing the disease should remain without further complication. When Monday came, however, unexpected symptoms set in; and the patient's condition became such as to seriously alarm the attendants. In the evening these symptoms increased in severity, and on the following Tuesday morning it became evident to the household that the end was approaching. Notwithstanding that a report of the poet's illness had crept into the local newspapers, few persons appeared to be alarmed by it; and to a very large number of even his immediate friends the announcement of his impending death was sudden and inexplicable.

During Wednesday and Thursday, there was a very slight improvement in Mr. Longfellow's condition,—but it afforded no grounds for hope,—and there was also a constant disposition to sleep. On the

evening of the last-named day, he rallied considerably, and evinced a desire to talk on various subjects. His mind appeared to be fully rational, and he manifested no lack of cheer and no signs of uneasiness. Towards midnight, however, the situation was again changed; and the patient became unconscious and could find no rest.

On Friday morning, the 24th of March, Mr. Longfellow again revived a little. He complained of no pain; but, during his lucid moments, he seemed to know, and to wish others to realize, that the end was approaching. His conversation through the day was somewhat incoherent, and at times he appeared not to be conscious of what he was saying. His disease (peritonitis) was now fully developed, and the attending physicians, despairing of the case, made known their fears to the family. About two o'clock the poet suddenly lapsed into a state of unconsciousness, and in this condition he remained until the close. He breathed his last, easily and apparently without pain, at ten minutes past three o'clock. He passed away "in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season."

Standing around the bedside of the poet were the members of his family: his three daughters, Alice, Edith, and Annie; his two sons, Charles A. and Ernest W.; his brother, Alexander W. of Portland; his sisters, Mrs. James Greenleaf of Cambridge, and Mrs. Pierce of Portland; his brother-in-law, Mr. Thomas G. Appleton, and a few others.

The same bells that a few months before had made known to the people of Cambridge at midnight, in a

befitting darkness and gloom, that the President of the United States was dead, now told them, while the bright sun was shining and the spring was opening, that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow had peacefully finished his honorable career within the house where he had long lived, and in the city which will ever cherish a tender pride in having been his home.

“His soul to him, who gave it, rose;  
God lead it to its long repose,  
Its glorious rest!  
And though the poet’s sun has set,  
Its light shall linger round us yet,  
Bright, radiant, blest.”

The last rites were fitting, and in harmony with what would have been — could he have expressed it — the last wish of the poet. They united the undisturbed retirement which the family and personal friends of the dead ever desire and have a right to possess, with that opportunity which the public seeks to pay its homage to one whom it has loved and honored. From the hour of his death to the burial, the city flags were displayed at half-mast, and the public buildings and many private dwellings were draped with emblems of mourning. Everybody seemed to lament the event as a common misfortune.

On Sunday, the 26th of March, at three o’clock, private funeral services were held at the home of the deceased. Among those present were, besides the family and immediate relatives, Ralph Waldo Emerson and daughter, Oliver Wendell Holmes, George William Curtis, Rev. Cyrus A. Bartol of the West Church, Boston, Samuel Ward of New York, Presi-

dent Eliot of Harvard University, Alexander Agassiz, John Owen, Dr. Morrill Wyman, and others, numbering in all about fifty.

The remains were laid in a plain casket covered with broadcloth, embossed with black ornaments. On the top of the casket were placed two long palm leaves crossed; and encircling the casket was a rim of the passion-flower vine, bearing one beautiful blossom. The silver plate bore the inscription:—

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW,  
BORN FEBRUARY 27TH, 1807.  
DIED MARCH 24TH, 1882.

The services at the house were conducted by the Rev. Samuel Longfellow, brother of the poet, and were opened with a short prayer, followed by the reading of the following selections from Mr. Longfellow's poems. The first selection was from "The Golden Legend: "—

"Weep not, my friends! rather rejoice with me.  
I shall not feel the pain, but shall be gone,  
And you will have another friend in heaven.  
Then start not at the creaking of the door  
Through which I pass. I see what lies beyond it."

The second selection was the poem entitled "Sustirra."

"Take them, O Death! and bear away  
Whatever thou canst call thine own!  
Thine image, stamped upon this clay,  
Doth give thee that, but that alone!

Take them, O Grave! and let them lie  
Folded upon thy narrow shelves,  
As garments by the soul laid by,  
And precious only to ourselves.

Take them, O great Eternity!  
Our little life is but a gust  
That bends the branches of thy tree,  
And trails its blossoms in the dust!"

The third selection was the following:—

"All is of God! If he but wave his hand,  
The mists collect, the rain falls thick and loud,  
Till, with a smile of light on sea and land,  
Lo! he looks back from the departing cloud.

Angels of Life and Death alike are his;  
Without his leave they pass no threshold o'er;  
Who, then, would wish or dare, believing this,  
Against his messengers to shut the door?"

Two hymns were sung by the quartet, with piano accompaniment. The second hymn, "Softly Now the Light of Day," concluded the ceremonies.

The funeral *cortége* of seventeen carriages then proceeded up Brattle Street to Mount Auburn Cemetery. At some little distance from the family tomb on Indian-Ridge path, the carriages halted; and the company of mourners walked slowly to the spot where, while the snowflakes were falling, the body was quietly deposited in its last resting-place.<sup>1</sup> A profusion of evergreen was then laid within the enclosure; and the following passages from the Scriptures were repeated by the Rev. Mr. Longfellow:—

"O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? Dust thou art, unto dust shalt thou

<sup>1</sup> The poet's grave is in the family lot, numbered "580," on Indian Ridge Path. At present neither headstone nor monument marks the spot.

return. The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Meanwhile large numbers of people had gathered in the chapel of Harvard College, whither the mourners were immediately taken after the conclusion of the simple ceremony at the grave. Every seat in the chapel, except those reserved for the family and friends, was already filled; and every available standing-place was also occupied. Many persons were unable to gain admission into the building.

On a table in front of the altar was a beautiful harp, composed of smilax and white and yellow flowers, with one broken string. The impressive exercises commenced with Mendelssohn's "Beati Mortui," by the college-choir, with organ accompaniment by Professor Paine. The Rev. Francis G. Peabody, formerly pastor of the First Unitarian Church of Cambridge, and now a professor in the Harvard Divinity School, then read the ninetyeth Psalm, also "I am the resurrection and the life," "we know in part and prophesy in part," and these stanzas from that most beautiful poem, "Resignation:" —

"We see but dimly through the mists and vapors ;  
Amid these earthly damps  
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers  
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death ! What seems so is transition ;  
This life of mortal breath  
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,  
Whose portal we call Death."



A selection from 2 Sam. xxiii. was next read : —

“ Now these be the last words of David, the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel.

“ The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.

“ The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.

“ And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds ; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.”

From “ Hiawatha ” were read the lines beginning with that verse which is true of Longfellow above all modern poets : —

“ He the sweetest of all singers.  
Beautiful and childlike was he,  
Brave as man is, soft as woman,  
Pliant as a wand of willow,  
Stately as a deer with antlers.

All the many sounds of nature  
Borrowed sweetness from his singing ;  
All the hearts of men were softened  
By the pathos of his music ;  
For he sang of peace and freedom,  
Sang of beauty, love, and longing ;  
Sang of death, and life undying  
In the land of the Hereafter.  
For his gentleness they loved him  
And the magic of his singing.”

After reading the beatitudes, Professor Peabody concluded with the reading of those not unfamiliar

lines, which, perhaps, as truly as any thing he ever wrote, embody the religious sentiment and belief of their author. They are taken from "The New-England Tragedies."

" And I remember still  
The words and from whom they came,  
Not he that repeateth the name  
But he that doeth the will.

And Him evermore I behold  
Walking in Galilee,  
Through the cornfield's waving gold,  
In hamlet, in wood, and in wold,  
By the shores of the beautiful sea.  
He toucheth the sightless eyes,  
Before him the demons flee,  
To the dead he saith ' Arise,'  
To the living, ' Follow Me.'  
And that voice still soundeth on  
From the centuries that are gone  
To the centuries that shall be.

From all vain pomps and shows,  
From the heart that overflows,  
And the false conceits of men ;  
From all the narrow rules  
And subtleties of schools,  
And the craft of tongue and pen.  
Bewildered with the search,  
Bewildered with the cry,  
Lo here ! lo there ! the Church !  
Poor sad humanity,  
Through all the ages meet,  
Turns back with bleeding feet  
By the weary road it came,  
Unto the simple thought

By the Great Master taught;  
And that remaineth still,  
Not he that repeateth the name,  
But he that doeth the will."

The choir then sang an English version of "Integer Vitæ."

The following beautiful address was then delivered by Professor Charles Carroll Everett of the Harvard Divinity School.

"In this service of sympathy and reverent sorrow, it is a comforting and inspiring thought that the feeling which has drawn us here is shared by multitudes wherever the English tongue is spoken. Many, indeed, share it, to whom the songs of our poet are known only in what is to them a foreign speech. It shows our civilization in one of its most interesting aspects, that a feeling so profound, so pure, so uplifting, should unite such a large portion of the world to-day. Here is no dazzling position, here is no startling circumstance. A simple life has uttered itself in song: and men listened, rejoiced, and loved; and now they mourn. Yet for us there is a deeper sorrow. While others mourn the poet who is gone, we mourn the man. He was our townsman, he was our neighbor, he was our friend. We knew the simple beauty of his life: we knew its truth, its kindness, its helpfulness, its strength. We could not indeed separate him from our thought and knowledge of his fame and of his genius, but even this showed only his heart in its true beauty. We saw him wear the honors of the world more easily than many bear the smallest triumphs of our ordinary life. Thus we

knew him and loved him, and thus we sorrow for him.

“But this difference of which I speak is, after all, one chiefly of degree. He poured himself into his songs, and wherever they went he was found with them; and, in these, others found the beauty of that spirit which was revealed to us through his nearer presence. Thus he drew very near to many hearts; thus many who never looked upon his face feel to-day that they, too, have lost a friend. You remember how sweetly and gracefully he greets these unseen and unknown friends in the dedication of one of his books. He feels their presence, though he sees them not. He enters their very households, sure of a greeting. Then he cries, —

“ ‘I hope, as no unwelcome guest,  
At the warm fireside, when the lamps are lighted,  
My place shall be reserved among the rest.’

“The kindly request was heeded. He found a place in many households which he had never seen, and now by many a fireside it is as though there were one more ‘vacant chair.’

“I said he poured his life into his work. It is singular that the phase of life and of experience which forms so large a portion of most poetry, which many sing if they sing nothing else, he was content to utter in prose, if prose we must call the language of his romances. He seems content to have scattered unbound the flowers of romantic love at the door of the temple of his song. There is something strange, too, in the fascination which the thought of death has for so many generous youth. You remember

that Bryant first won his fame by a hymn to death; and so, I think, the first poem of Longfellow's which won recognition for him was that translation of those sounding Spanish lines which exalt the majesty of death, and sing the shortness of human life. But the first song that rang with his own natural voice, which won the recognition of the world, was not a song of death, it was a Psalm of Life. That little volume of the 'Voices of the Night' formed an epoch in our literary history. It breathed his whole spirit, his energy, his courage, his tenderness, his faith: it formed the prelude of all that should come after. I do not mean that he tore open the secrets of the heart at home; but all is there, transfigured, enlarged, made universal, made the common property of all. We wander with him through foreign lands: he takes us with him into his studies, and in his translations gives us the very fairest fruit. We hear the greeting of the new-born child; we are taken into the sacred joy of home; the merry notes of 'The Children's Hour' ring upon our ears; we feel the pains of sorrow and of loss; we hear the prayer of elevated trust; and, when age draws near at last, when the shadows begin to fall, then we share with him the solemnity and the sublimity of the gathering darkness.

"The life that is thus imaged in these songs was one that is fitted for such imaging. I think we may look at it as one of the most rounded lives that have been lived upon earth. So far as we can see from the outside, there seems little that was lacking to its completeness. I do not mean there was no sor-

row in it. Sorrow there was. What life could be made perfect without it? What poet's life could be made complete without the experience of suffering? But, from the very first, his life flowed on its calm and even way. His first songs received the applause of the world: the sympathy of men moved with him as he moved forward in his work. Travel in foreign lands enlarged his sympathies, and added a picturesque to his poems which they might otherwise have lacked. The literature of all ages and nations was opened to him, and he drew from all. It is said, I know, that thus he represents the culture of the past and that of foreign lands, — that he is not our poet, not American. But what is the genius of our country? What is America? Is it not the very genius of our nation to bring together elements from far-off lands and fuse them into a new type of man? The American poet should represent the genius of our land. He must have no provincial muse. He may sing of forest and of sea, but not of these alone. He must be the "heir of all the ages;" he must be the ripest fruit of the culture of all time; he must absorb all this into himself, and stand free, strong, bold, — a man as simple as though he had never strayed beyond his native heath. He must, in other words, be like our Longfellow. When what we may call his preparation was completed, his life still flowed on, its course gaining only greater and calmer fulness as it flowed. His age was as beautiful as his manhood and his youth. That marvellous poem 'Morituri Salutamus' is perhaps to-day the grandest hymn to age that was ever written. It is no



distant dream, as it was when those sounding Spanish lines flowed from his pen. He feels its shadows, he feels that the night is drawing nigh, and yet he stands strong and calm and bold as at first. He greets the present as he greeted in old times the future. He gathers from the coming on of age, the approaching night, no signal for rest, but a new summons to activity. He cries, —

“‘It is too late! Ah, nothing is too late  
Till the tired heart shall cease to palpitate.’

“And so he takes up his glad work again. I think some of his sweetest and deepest songs date from this latest period, such as the poem to Tennyson, — that chivalrous greeting from one knight of song to another, — and that tender message that he sent to Lowell across the seas in ‘The Elmwood Herons.’ There comes even a little playfulness, such as there is not much hint of in his earlier songs. His was a calm and loving age, full of activity, confidence, and peace. At last he writes upon his latest volume those words that marked the close of his career, and his labors are at an end. The Ultima Thule has been reached

“The world’s love gathered about him as he lived, and its homage was breathed into his ear till on his last birthday there was paid him an ovation such as has been given to few living. From his old home in Maine came greetings: children’s voices — those voices which of all others had been ever most welcome to his ear — joined in the acclaim; and thus the story of his life was completed. His last book

had been written, and marked by him as his last. The final greeting of the world had been uttered to him, and he passed away.

“He passed away! I think we have not yet learned the meaning of those words. I think we do not yet quite believe them. We half think still that we may some time meet him in his familiar haunts. And does not this protest of the heart contain a truth? His spirit has been called, we trust, to higher service. Yet he had given himself unto the world. He had breathed himself into his songs: in them he is with us still. Wherever they go, as they wander over the world, he will be with them, a minister of love. He will be by the side of the youth, pointing to heights as yet unsealed, and bidding him have faith and courage. He will be with the wanderer in foreign lands, making the beauty he sees more fair. He will be with the mariner upon the sea; he will be with the explorer in the woods; he will be in the quiet beauty of home; he will be by the side of the sorrowing heart, pointing to a higher faith: and, as old age is gathering about the human soul, he will be there to whisper courage, still to cry, —

“‘For age is opportunity no less than youth itself.’

“Thus will he inspire in all faith and courage, and point us all to those two sources of strength that alone can never fail, ‘heart within, and God o’erhead.’”

The death of Mr. Longfellow was not unexpected, for hushed rumors from Cambridge had led all to

look for his departure. It was not premature: for his genius had flowered, and passed his long summer; and the autumnal fruit had ripened, and been gathered in. Sixty years have flown by since the first blossoming, and for half a century the flavor of the fruit has been known and recognized the world over for its delicacy and pure quality. Some one has asserted that the poet's name went abroad but a little behind Irving's and Cooper's. It travelled farther than Bryant's, more swiftly than Hawthorne's, and is, to-day, across the water, dearer than any other name in American literature. In the pure, amiable, home-like qualities that reach the heart and captivate the ear, no person can place Longfellow second. He, more surely than any other poet, touches the best hopes and sweetest longings in human nature. He has done as much as the best to diffuse the spirit of ripe culture, of refined taste, — the atmosphere of gentle and chaste scholarship, — over a land that sadly needed such an atmosphere. When he was made a professor at Harvard, he became indeed the presiding genius over the *belles-lettres* of America; and the scholars throughout the country might well have asked the privilege of contributing to his salary. He taught the whole people, he chastened all minds, lifting even the blacksmith at the forge, the woodman on the frontier, as well as the student in his laboratory. His volumes became a university for the poor and ignorant, — and they remain.

There is scarcely a poem in these volumes that did not come directly from the heart of its author, and that does not appeal as directly to the heart of its

reader. And how full of noble thoughts, of genial sentiment, of comfort and hope and sympathy, of kindness and trust and aspiration, are nearly all of them! He looked upon life as an earnest reality, an arena of contest; and it was his constant aim to breathe energy into fainting hearts, to sustain lagging purposes, and to fix the reader's thought upon what is stable and eternal. He grew up with the literary growth of the country, which dates no farther back than his boyhood. He was in himself a very essential and important factor in that growth, — one of the literary and moral forces of the nation. This is his praise. And, now that he has left us, we feel that he has left our literature well born, nobly nurtured, far-travelled, and secure of its future. Some writer in another generation may surpass him in power or grandeur or sweetness, or any of the qualities which command success or give influence; but no epoch of the development of our literature as such can possibly be more beautiful, more redolent, than that fine season when the breath of ancient learning first mingled with the crisp winds of New England in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

[The story of Longfellow's life is one that will be rehearsed with renewed interest as the years go by. It is a lesson in itself as full of noble example for the young, as is his poetry of choice precepts. He had a sunny nature, which he transfused throughout all his writings. The turbulence that made the lives of Byron and of Poe miserable was unknown to him; and as his life was, so is his verse, — pure, serene, and strong, — with the strength of the village black-

smith's brawny arms and the tenderness of Evangeline's undying love. [ We may well be proud of such a poet, — proud of his productions, and doubly proud of the lesson of his blameless life.]





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